

The Society of North India in the Sixteenth Century as Depicted Through Contemporary Hindi Literature



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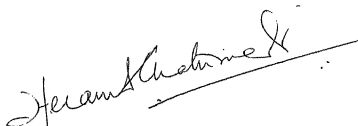
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INTRODUCTION

HISTORY, SOCIETY AND LITERATURE : Their Inter-Relationship

The Background :

The history of the sixteenth century India, has been a very interesting study - politically, Socially and culturally (That is, historically Speaking). The changes in all these spheres were not only momentous and marked but, also, revolutionary. The Turko - Afghan rule in the early Medieval period, gave way to the establishment of the Mughal sway - but, it lacked a solid basis and was swept away- rather, too soon, by the Afghans under Sher Shah. But, it is to their credit that, the Mughals were able to strike back successfully, and restore their lost glory and dignity. Moreover, they were able to perpetuate their dynastic rule in this land for about two centuries.

The political turmoil of the first half of the sixteenth century was transitional. It gave way, eventually, to the stability that signified Akbar's reign - beginning with the second half of the sixteenth century. This period of flux and continuity-makes the study of that century, more complex and complicated.

HISTORY AND SOCIETY :

Marc Bloch, apart from his study of the 'feudal society' had left behind to posterity, an unfinished manuscript, published in English, as 'The Historian Craft'¹, in which he has illustrated

1. Marwick, A. : The Nature of History; MacMillan, London, 1970 ;

not only the use of history and its purpose but, also, the historians methods. And, it is here, that he says that, he is quite optimistic about the future when the methodology would be perfect - ' when historians will be better equipped with linguistic and social science techniques'² and would then analyze history, fully and properly. Christopher Hill also insists upon the social function of history. Echoing Marc Bloch, he has called for a history embracing, 'the total activity of society'.³ Arnold Toynbee is also closer to this concept of historical studies, when he opines that, 'the intelligible unit of historical study is neither a nation-state nor (at the other end of the scale) mankind as a whole, but a certain grouping of humanity, which we have called a society'.⁴ Thus, it is the study and analysis of the various existent social groups - which, forms the content of history - but the society itself is a vast mass, hence, each historian must be content with analyzing one particular aspect of the society.⁵

2. Marwick, A. : The Nature of History; p.76.

3. Marwick, A. : p. 206.

4. Toynbee, A. : A Study Of History (abridged by D.C. Somervell) ;
A Laurel Edition ; Dell Publishing Co. Inc., New York, 1981;p.63.

5. Marwick, A; p. 77.

The fundamental question in history, according to Marx, is 'how humanity developed from the earliest tool- using primate to the present'.⁶ In other words, history includes every trace and vestige of everything that man has done or thought since first he appeared on earth.⁷ Thus, a comprehensive study of the contemporary Society can be the true mirror of the advancement of that age, for man is more than a warrior, a subject, or a princely ruler; the state is by no means, his sole interest.⁸

As a matter of fact, in order to sustain the objectivity of his historical analysis, the historian, generally, illustrates, rather, than correct the ideas of the communities within which they live and work.⁹ Thus, the true and accurate depiction of a section of society, at a given time, in a definitive place, is the true work of a true historian.¹⁰

6. Hobsbawm, E.J. : 'Karl Marx's Contribution To Historiography'; An Article in R. Blackburn (Ed.) 'Ideology In Social Studies'; U.K. Fontana Books, 1978 (6th Impression); p. 112.

7. Robinson, J.H. : 'The New History' ; A Free Press Paperback, New York ; Also, MacMillan, London, 1965; p.1.

8. Robinson, J.H.; p. 9.

9. Toynbee, A.; p. 15.

10. Ibid.

The Historian's Approach To The Analysis Of Society :

In order to present an objective and impartial picture, a historian should not make or make-up history, either of the present or of the past and should not be fanatical about using only one interpretation, one frame-work.¹¹ Lest, he will be forced to work within self - imposed restrictions of the parameters that he had defined. He will, thus, try to deduce the very premises, by which he had started.¹²

According to the Positivists' view of history, it was considered to be an objective thing. They held that, theory would come, like steam from a kettle when it reached the boiling-point. Thus, they assumed that theory - 'interpretations' will emerge, after the collection of facts, that is, by induction.¹³ The positivism's major contribution to history, was the introduction of concepts, methods and models from the natural sciences into

11. Devahuti : 'Notes On Approaches To Indian History'; A chapter In Devahuti (Ed.) : The Problems of Indian Historiography; D.K. Publications, Delhi, 1979; p. 89.

12. Ibid.

13. Jones, Gareth Stedman : 'History : The Poverty of Empiricism' in Robin Blackburn (Ed.). : 'Ideologies In Social Studies'; Fontana Books, U.K., 1978 (6th Impression); p. 112.

Social investigation. In practice, however, it is very difficult to analyze historical facts on the basis of models meant specifically for the study of natural sciences. The 'Positivism' had little to say about the phenomena, that characterize human society, as distinct from those, which could be directly derived from the non - social factors, or modelled on the natural sciences.¹⁴ The views it had about the human character of history were speculative, if not, metaphysical.¹⁵

Thus, it is always difficult to adhere to a set model or frame-work and be able to analyze the total environment, that is, the totality of the historical fact. Moreover, as Hobsbawm has rightly pointed out, these models eliminate most of history, in order to concentrate on one small, though, admittedly, vital span of it and grossly oversimplify the mechanisms of historical change even with this small span of time.¹⁶

14. Hobsbawm, E.J. : Karl Marx's Contribution To Historiography'

In R. Blackburn (Ed.): 'Ideologies In Social Studies'; p.268.

15. Ibid.

16. Hobsbawm, E.J. : pp. 274-275.

The historian, as a matter of fact, should try neither to be limited by any such 'boundaries' nor let his work suffer from prejudices. Rather, he should be true to his discipline and have a more balanced and objective approach in analyzing the society, as it then existed - as the 'terms' and 'trends' of a 'model' are hardly sufficient to give the exact picture of the contemporary society. He should, thus, try to see the past in the idiom of the past.¹⁷

Thus, for the correct analysis of a given time-span and its 'true' picture-the Societal Organization has to be studied as such, to explain - unlike other structural- functional models of society - why and how Societies change and transform themselves; in other words, the facts of Social evolution.¹⁸

HISTORY AND LITERATURE : THEIR RELATIONSHIP :

Every age is significant in its own sense and is characterized by a specific mode of thinking, 'a climate of opinion'.¹⁹ In order to be able to understand this 'opinion', we have to unravel

17. Devahuti (Ed.) : The Problems of Indian Historiography; p.89.

18. Hobsbawm, E.J. ; p. 274.

19. Marwick, A. : p. 70.

the sources, where they are best and most fruitfully expressed and, that is literature - the expression of that opinion, permeating a particular age. Trevlyan has expressed that a knowledge of history enhances the understanding of literature.²⁰ The reverse, as a matter of fact, is equally true.

Moreover, History has been considered as a constituent of Literature. Philip S. Miller in his introduction to the 'Development of Historiography', opines that, the one great lesson taught by Herodotus is that history is a literary form.²¹ The historian does not stand apart from his time and age and, this coincidence of the historian with the intellectual climate of his time is so general and undeniable that the suspicion does not lie far away that history is no more than one form of literary expression of the period in which the author lives.²²

Thus, we see that history is also related to literature and the best histories are occasionally works of literature. However, the relation between history and literature is nicely balanced only when a serious study of sources is united with the

20. Marwick, A.; pp. 57-58.

21. FitzSimons, A. , Alfred G. Pundt & Charles E. Nowell (Ed.).
'The Development Of Historiography'; Pennsylvania, 1954;
Introductory pages.

22. Ibid.

power of historical imagination so that the portrayal of the past has both form and truth.²³

History is inseparable from literature in another way. It, too, like drama and novel, grew out of mythology, a primitive form of apprehension and expression in which, the line between fact and fiction is left undrawn.²⁴ It has, for example, been said of the Iliad that anyone, who starts reading it as history will find it full of fiction but, equally, anyone who starts reading it as fiction will find that it is full of history. All histories resemble the Iliad to this extent, that they cannot entirely dispense with the fictional element²⁵ or its use as a tool of its own expression and analysis.

If we now proceed to examine the causes and the consequences of the transformation of local mother-tongues into "occumenical lingue franche", we shall find that a language which wins this kind of victory over its rivals, usually owes its success to the social advantage of having served in an age

23. FitzSimons, A, Et. Al; The Development of Historiography'
Introductory Pages.

24. Toynbee, A. : 'A Study of History'; New York, 1981; p. 63.

25. Ibid.

of social disintegration or turmoil, as the tool of some community that has been potent either in war or in commence.²⁶ That is why, the whole 'literary content' of the period assumes all the more importance and the final emergence of the languages used by Tulsidas, Surdas, Kabirdas, Meera Bai, Nanak and Dadu into the "Lingua franca" is a testimony to the above. But, at the same time, we find that languages, like human beings, are unable to win victories without paying a price ; and the price a language pays for becoming "Lingua franca" is the sacrifice of its native subtleties.²⁷

To understand an age in its entirety, it becomes imperative to study the literature of that period, as art and literature give expression to man's most delicate and subtle feelings.²⁸ Man's emotions, ideas and sensibility are moulded by circumstances. Emotions and ideas have no existence apart and in isolation from our life.²⁹

As a matter of fact, every social system gives a certain direction to thoughts, feelings and sensibility in consonance with social relationships ; moulds them according to its requirements.

26. Toynbee, A. : A Study of History; New York, 1981; p.534.

27. Ibid.

28. Gupta, P.C. : Literature And Society; P.P.H., New Delhi, 1983; pp. 7-8.

29. Ibid, p. 8.

It is not possible to escape this influence of time and circumstances. Not only this, classes too, have their respective viewpoints. Where one stands in society, influences one's thinking, one's intellectual and spiritual make-up. Individuals and thinkers break away from their class-affiliations. This only happens, when the old social system is experiencing a crisis, old relationships are crumbling and the doors of new creation being opened.³⁰

In the middle ages, in Hindi literature, the saint-poets wrote poetry so also the court-poets. But the vision of the court-poets is blurred; they are mirrors of a social system which has exhausted all possibility of advance and progress.³¹ In contrast with them, the saint-poets were basically opposed to this social system, a system breeding inequalities and injustice. Their attitudes bore numerous traces of the feudal order, but basically, their view was clear and progressive.³²

In literature, too, poetry is that branch of it, whose very origin and development has kept company with the life-struggles of man. In primitive society, poetry served the purpose of lightening the burden of labour. It was also the vehicle of

30. Gupta, P.C. : Literature And Society; pp.8-9.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

all knowledge. The peasant reaping the harvest, raised his voice in a song of joy. The priest offering homage to his God in the temple sought the help of poetry. Writing had not yet been discovered.³³ Hence, man carried the burden of all his knowledge in his memory. Poetry was, thus, the foster-mother of all science, literature, philosophy and knowledge.³⁴

The great poetry of the Indian medieval age - the creation of the saint-poets-was inspired by the struggles and sorrows of life. Poetry, as a matter of fact, reflects life and serves as a weapon for changing it too. This action and reaction are a permanent feature of relations between life and literature. Poetry thus, reveals the various facets of life, its decaying elements, as well as, its forward-looking elements.³⁵ Society leaves its lasting impress on the poets' thinking and emotional make-up. Another aspect of this truth is that man's thinking moulds social life.³⁶

33. Gupta, P.C. : Literature And Society; p. 23.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid; p. 24.

36. Ibid; p. 25.

The Caste Groups

The Brahmins :

The castes seem to have existed in the Indian Society from times immemorial. But, the latest researches have proved that in the Vedic period, there were just two main societal groups - the Aryas and the Dasyus or Dasas and that, these were totally different from each other in several respects.¹ In an early hymn of Rig-Ved², a prayer is offered to Asvins to promote the prosperity of the 'Brahma', the 'Ksattrra', and the 'Vis' and secure intellectual progress, military pre-eminence and cattle prosperity. This passage, also presupposes the division of the Aryan's into three classes, Brahman, Ksatriya and Vaisya³. In a later hymn, however, 'the name of the four castes of the later period - Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra are expressly mentioned with their special characteristics in the famous Rig - Vedic 'Purush-Shukta'⁴

1. Altekar : 'The Vedic Society' ; p.224.

2. Ibid; Also, Rig-Ved; VIII, 35-16-18.

3. Ibid; p.225; Also Yadav, p.2.

4. Ibid; Also Rig-Ved; X.90.

Thus, it appears that, Altekar is of the view that castes developed later on 'Had the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras developed into rigid castes in the Vedic period, they would have been mentioned certainly more than twice in the Rig-Veda, as is actually the case'.¹ The Rig-Veda, as a matter of fact, praises heredity in only one passage.² It is, therefore, clear that classes existed in the Rig-Vedic society, but they had not developed into castes.³

In the post - Vedic period, the four castes had assumed definite roles and functions, as is evident from the perusal of Panini's Grammar, composed soon after 500 B.C.⁴ Thus, from this period onwards, caste became an important element in the societal organization of the Indian Society. However, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee opines, rather, stresses that, " In practical life, caste became rigid, and almost

1. Altekar, p. 225.

2. Ibid; Also, Rig-Ved, II. 43.2.

3. Altekar ; p.226; Also Yadav, p.2.

4. Mookerjee, R.K. : 'The Hindu Civilization; p. 120 & pp.129-130; Prof. B.N.S. Yadav has pointed out that the theory of caste was presented in its classic form in the Manusmriti with a view to combating the new forces and tendencies and to reinstating and strengthening the earlier ideals of the social system, p. 3.

inflexible, after the conquest of North India by the Turks."¹

Al Beruni, an Iranian (973 to 1048-49 A.D.) prepared his famous work on India, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud (around 1030 A.D.). In this work, he mentions the Hindu caste system. According to him, 'the Hindus call their castes 'varna', i.e. colour'² and, that, 'these castes are from the very beginning only four.'³ He, then, refers to the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras and how they were born or created from the head, hand, thigh and feet respectively of the Brahma.⁴

When we turn to the Hindi literature of the sixteenth century, similar references are available, which indicate the existence of a well defined caste - system.

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1. Chatterjee, S.K. : Contributions From Different Language-culture Groups'; p. 84; Also Sachau, I, p.22.
 2. Al Beruni : India (abridged), p. 46 Sachau, I, p.99.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid; pp.46-47; Manucci ; p. 35.

कबीर बाहमण गुरु जगत का - - - - -¹

Kabirdas here refers to the teachers of society or world and calls them 'Brahman'. Tulsidas has also used the term 'Bahman' or Brahman in his Manas.

- - - - - । जनु मारेसि गुर बाँझ गाई ॥²

In the other contemporary works of this period, we find the usage of this term to denote the people of this class. For example :

लोग बहोरे बाँझ आए । - - - - -³

Or

बाँझ वेद भनहिं - - - - -⁴

Or

- - - - - , बाँझ तिलक दादस किए ।⁵

However, Kabirdas has used another term for this caste and , that is, 'Pandit', as is evident from his verse :

कबीर पंडित सेती कहि रह्या - - - - -⁶

1. Kabir Granthawali ; p.62, V.10.

2. Manas; p.460, v. 146.2; Also, p.159, v. 164.3.

3. Mrigavati; p.120, v.149

4. Ibid.

5. MadhuMalti; p. 103, v.442. ,

6. Kabir Granthawali; pp.62-63, v.13.

That, 'Pandit' too was a prevalent term for this caste, is borne out by the works of other contemporary poets, like Qutbun¹ and Manjhan.² Surdas, however, refers to this caste by the name of 'Vipra'.

घसि चंदन चारु मँगार्ई, विप्रनि तिसक करे ।³

Even, Tulsidas has used this term for them.

विप्रबुंद सब सादर बन्दे । - - - - -⁴

Or,

बैठे सिव किमुन्ह सिरु नाई । हृदयें सुमिरि निज प्रभु रघुराई ॥⁵

It is, thus evident that, they were revered and respected by the society as such.

द्विष निंदक बहु नरक भोग करि, जग जनमइ वापस सरीर धरि ।⁶

They were also known as 'Dwij', as Tulsidas refers to them by this term.

घसि चंदन चारु मँगार्ई, विप्रनि तिसक करे ।

द्विष-गुरु जन को पहिराई, सब के पाइ परे ।⁷

Surdas also refers to them as 'Dwij'. Thus, it appears that, in the contemporary society, Brahmans were also called 'Dwij'.

1. Mrigavati; p. 1, v. 1.

2. Madhu Malti; p.83, v.1, Also, pp.101-102, v.437 & p.102, v.438.

3. SurSagar, I; pp.265-267, v.24/642.

4. Manas; p.203, v.214; Also, p.21, v.14 chh (छ)

5. Manas; p.103, v.99.2; Also, p.159, v.164.2 & p.259, v.282.

Thus, it is evident that, the status of the Brahmanas was traditionally regarded as the highest among the four varnas.¹

बेदी प्रथम महीसुर चरना । मोह जनित संसय सब हरना ।²

Tulsidas also points out to their knowledge, which dispels ignorance and, for which, they were to be respected. But , a Brahman, who is devoid of the knowledge of Vedas is to be condemned.

सोक्षिन् बिप्र जो वेद बिहीना । तजि निरु धरमु विषय लयबीना ।³
Thus, it seems , that it was the duty of the Brahmanas to study and teach the Vedas :

द्वार ठाढ़ हैं द्विज - बाबन

चारों वेद पढ़ैत सुख आगर, अति सुकंठ - सुर - गावन ।⁴

Or, again, as Surdas has referred to, in another verse:

राजा हक पंडित पोरि तुम्हारी ।

चारों वेद पढ़ैत सुख आगर, ह्वे पावन-बपु-धारी ।⁵

It is a truism to state that as teachers the Brahmanas performed a social function of vital importance.⁶ As a matter of fact, only they were entitled to teach the Vedas.⁷

1. Yadav; p.19.

2. Manas; p.4 , v.1.2.

3. Manas, p.481, v.171.2

4. Sur Sagar I; p.176, v.13/440.

5. Ibid; v. 14 /441

6. Yadav; p.19.

7. Ibid.

The primary duty of the Brahman, as has been pointed out by Kabirdas too was teaching :

कबीर बाह्मण गुरु जगत का - - - - -¹

He, also says :

औरों को परमोधता - - - - -²

Even, in the verses of Surdas, we have reference to the reverence, in which this section of society was held-due to the fact that they were the Guru or teachers :

द्विज-गुरु जन को पहिराई, सब के पाइ परे ।³

It is also, evident from above that, the touching of the feets of the 'Brahmans' was a sacred task to be performed by all during various ceremonies etc. Even, Tulsidas corroborates the above, by his descriptions in the Manas :

बिबुध बिप्र बुध ग्रह चरण बंदि बहउं कर जोरि ।
होइ प्रसन्न पुखहु सकल मनु मनोरथ मोरि ॥⁴

That, the Hindu kings, on their coronation, paid respect to the Brahmans is also evident :

सिंघासनु अति दिव्य सुहावा । जाइ न बरनि बिरंषि बनावा ॥

बैठे सिव बिप्रन्ह सिर नाई । हृदयें सुमिरि निष प्रभु रघुराई ॥⁵

1. Kabir Granthawali ; p.62, v.10.

2. Ibid, pp.62-63, v. 13.

3. Sur Sagar, I; pp. 265-267, v. 24/642

4. Manas ; p.21, v. 14 chh.

5. Manas ; p. 103, v. 99.2

Thus, the kings not only pay respect to the brahmans - the repository of Vedic knowledge but, also give them grains and cows etc. as "dakshina".¹

दह रे असीस जोतिही बहुरे पारन्हि बहुत पसाउ ।²

The above verse of Qutbun also points the same. It was a usual custom that, gifts were received by the Brahmins.³ Moreover, in the context of 'pratigraha', some authorities have laid special emphasis on that, from the rulers.⁴ And, that this practise continued even in the sixteenth century, North India is amply borne by Kabirdas :

तु बाह्यण - - - - -
ते सब भूति राजा मागे, मेरे राम धियाना ।⁵

In the sixteenth century Northern India a section of Brahmanas had also taken to astrology as their profession.⁶

पंहुत और बुण्डित हंकारे । रासि गनई ओ मस्त "उन्हारे" ।

गनि गुनि पत्रा देखहु कोन गरह दहुँ सुद ।

नाउ धरहु निरमल के लखन देखि ओ बुदि ॥⁷

1. Savitri Chandra ; p. 15.

2. Mrigavati, p.12, v.16.

3. Yadav; p.19.

4. Ibid.

5. Kabir Granthawali; p.294, v.44.

6. Yadav; p. 20.

7. Mrigavati ; p. 11, v.15.

Thus, it seems from the above verse that even in the sixteenth century, the Brahmans were specially invited on a child's birth and then, asked to consult their 'Patra' to perform the task of an astrologer.¹ And, it was after a proper study of this only, that a name was ascribed or given to the child and this was known as the 'Namkaran', as practised even today.²

They were again consulted to give a suitable date- after consulting the Rashi etc. when a child could be initiated into eating, that is for the 'Annaprashan':

नंद महर मह सुनि पुलकित जिय, हरि अन्नासन जोग भर ।

बिपु बुलाइ नाम सै बूझ्यो, रासि सोधि इक सुदिन घरयो ।³

The status of the Brahmans was traditionally regarded as the highest among the four varnas.⁴ and they were supposed to be the shadow or image of God Himself :

पुत्र के बचन, वेद-बुध-सम्मत, मम मूरत महिदेवमई है ।⁵

Even Kabirdas seems to acquiesce in the superiority of the Brahmans. With a firm faith in the Hindu philosophy, he calls

1. Travernier, II; p. 182.

2. Mrigavati; p.12, v.16.

3. Sur Sagar I, pp.290-291, v. 88/706.

4. Yadav ; p.19.

5. Vinay Patrika; pp. 230-231, v. 139.2.

his actions and deeds (Karmas) of the past birth the reason for being born a julaha, that is, in the weaver class;

पूरव जनम हम बाह्मण होते , चौठे करम तप हीना ।
रामदेव की सेवा चुका , पकरि जुलहा कीहा ॥¹

It is also evident from the above verse that, Kabirdas, most probably, suffered from an inferiority complex and , taking advantage of the logic of Hindu philosophy tried to prove that he, himself, was a Brahman in the last birth.

Another contemporary poet Surdas, corroborates the inference of Kabirdas and opines that a man is born in the Brahman caste only due to the grace of God :

स्वपचहु स्त्रेष्ट होत पद सेवत, बिनु गोपाल द्विज जनम न भावे ।²

Thus, it seems, that, a myth got associated with the caste-system, that one could improve one's caste by being born a Brahman - only through God's grace ! This, then, became the basis of caste- distinctions, :

तू बाह्मण भै कासी का जुलहा, चीन्हि न मोर गियाना ³

1. Kabir Granthawali; p. 294, v. 44.

2. Sur Sagar, I; p.76, v. 233; Also, pp.265-267,v.24/642.

3. Kabir Granthawali, p.294, v.44.

Here too, Kabirdas is not able to overcome his complex. Moreover, it is evident that, he had a deep sense of frustration, as the Brahmins were not listening to him or were willing to accept his ideas simply because he belonged to a non-Brahmanical group. They did not listen to him or recognize his knowledge. This makes it evident that Brahmins occupied a high position in the society and were not willing to accept any knowledge that was not traditional:

पंडिता मन रंजिता , भक्ति हेत ल्यो लाइ रे ।

प्रेम प्रीति गोपाल भजि नर, और कारण जाइ रे ।'

The Brahmins or Pandits followed the traditional knowledge (scriptural) Path (or, Gyan Marg) for salvation. They had, no faith in the 'Bhakti Marg' (The Path of Devotion) for the same. And, so, Kabirdas asks them to recognize or agree to the path that he was treading and , also, to follow it.

From the above analysis, it appears that the Brahmins of the sixteenth century, North India, were not willing to accept the 'Bhakti' theory of salvation.

The reason being that their position in the societal organization depended on their being the masters of the scriptures.¹

कबीर पंडित सेती कही रहया , भीतरि भेजा नाहि ।

औरों को परमोघता , गया सुहरकया मोहि ॥²

And, since, they were not willing to reflect on their knowledge, they were stagnating. This had also resulted in their rigidity to accept anything other than the traditional:

कबीर रासि पराई राखता , छाया घर का छेत ।

औरों को परमोघता , सुख में पड़िया रेत ॥³

It appears, according to Kabir's views, that, whatever knowledge the Brahmins had - they were spreading to others.⁴ Giving knowledge to others - by preaching continuously - they did not have time to reflect or to add

1. Yadav; p.19- Refers to their authority to teach Veds, as well as, their mastery over Purans, which were recited by them before an enthusiastic gathering- 'with the increased popularity of listening to Puranas' evident.

2. Kabir Granthawali ; pp.62-63, v.13.

3. Ibid, p. 63, v.15.

4. Refer above f.n. 1,

anything new, that is why dust is collecting in their mouths. But , acquiescing in another knowledge , may result in a fall in their own hierarchical position in a traditional society. That is the reason , it seems, they give no recognition to new knowledge. And , thus, challenges to them seem to grow :

कबीर बांझमण गुरु जगत का , साधु का गुरु नाहिं ।¹

It appears that new forces represented by saints like Kabirdas, were willing to serve a warning to them. They did not wish to consider the Brahmans as the teachers of Sadhus- or, those, who were traversing their own path towards salvation. These latter, follow the 'Bhakti Marg', as had been inferred earlier.² And, it seems, that the times were fast changing :

पुष्टु के बचन, वेद - बुध - सम्मत, "मम मूरत महिदेवमई है"।
तिनकी मति रिस-राग-मोह-मद, लोभ लालची लीलै लई है ॥³

The afore-mentioned verse throws light on the myth that the Brahmans were the God's image. And, that is why, perhaps, they were venerated in the Indian

1. Kabir Granthawali ; p. 62, v.10.

2. Ibid; p. 376, v. 1.

3. Vinay Patrika, pp. 230-231, v.139.2

society.¹ It is, however, likely that, they lost this position of pre-eminence in society, because, they imbibed certain evil qualities like ill - temper, attachments, desires, intoxication and greed.² :

आश्रम-चरन-धरम-बिरहित जग , लोक - वेद- मरणाद गई है ।
प्रजा पतित, पाबंड -पापरत, अपने-अपने-रंग रही है ॥³

The whole world, as a matter of fact, appeared devoid of values and, in this value-less society, everybody was acting according to his own way-in a non-confirmist manner. Corruption had become the order of the day and, even Brahmans had not escaped this process of degradation.⁴ Tulsidas is airing the view of the public, in which, they then held the Brahmans. They were, in fact, expected to be innately good, virtuous and men of character.⁵ :

- - - - - । द्विष विह पनेउ उधार तपी ॥⁶

1. Yadav: pp.18-19 : Prof. Yadav points out that their position was basically due to their austerity, piety and intellectual achievements.

2. Vinay Patrika, pp. 230-231, v. 139.2.

3. Ibid; v. 139.

4. Refer to f.n. 2 above.

5. Refer to f.n. 1 and 3 above; also Kabir Granthawali, pp.62-64.

6. Manas ; p.1016, v. 100.4.

Things had come to such a pass that, Tulsidas exclaimed that the Brahmans were recognized by their 'Janew' and the ascetics by their bare-bodies. Thus, the sacred thread was the only outer symbol signifying their caste,¹ in the sixteenth century North India. Even Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India, on the eve of the Battle of Khanua, mentions about the 'zinar',² which was worn 'on the neck',³

न व गृह बाधन भक्ता रासी । तिनहुँ न काटी जेम की पासी ॥⁴

Kabirdas in the afore-mentioned verse, questions that, if the Brahman, too was not free from the bondage of birth and death - he was also an ordinary mortal. He had questioned the very premise of the Hindu caste-system and challenged the hierarchical - societal organization.⁵

Thus, we may infer from the above analysis that the poets of Medieval India by questioning the social supremacy of the Brahmans had symbolised a gradual awakening taking place in the society against their domination.⁶

1. Savitri Chandra; p.92.

2. Babar Nama, (Beveridge); p.561; Also f.n. 5, p.561.

3. Ibid ; Also, Fitch, p.19.

4. Kabir Granthawali; p.226, v. 141.

5. Chitravali ; p.55.

6. 252 Vaishnavon ki Varta ; p. 31.

The Kshatriyas or Rajputs :

Another caste to which, reference is made during the sixteenth century, is 'Kshatriya'. It was the martial caste, which fought for the country's defence - as it was its duty. Its 'dharma' was war, bravery and chivalry. As a matter of fact, they preferred dying vallantly in a war - to attain 'Kshatriya Gati' or a Kshatri's true death :

झी न करौ सपथ तो हरि की , छत्रिय - गतिहि न पाउँ ।¹

Moreover, it was considered shameful for a Kshatri to show his back to the enemy or to flee the battle-field :

सुरदास रनभूमि विषय बिहू , जियत न पीठि दिखाउँ ॥²

Further, about the function and duties of a Kshatri, Surdas says :

सुर सकुचि जो सरन गँभारी , छत्री धर्म न होई ।³

It is evident from the above verse that a Kshatri was supposed to be the protector of the people.⁴ And, anybody who sought shelter from him was to be especially cared for. It was, thus, the 'Kshatri' Dharm' to protect the weak.

1. Sur Sagar I, p.87,v.270.

2. Ibid.

3. Sur Sagar I, p.232, v.121/565.

4. See Also, Savitri Chandra II, p.93.

and the oppressed.

ध्वी हवे करि खड्ग संभावू , जोग सुगति दोउ साधू ।¹

Thus, Kabir also stresses that, bearing of arms was the main function or duty of a Kshatri.

Kabirdas in another verse, brings forth the basic quality, that a kshatri was supposed to possess in the contemporary period. He was to be endowed with 'Rajas' or king-like qualities :

रज बिना' कैसो राजपूत - - - - -²

We can further infer that Rajput was a word which was used as a synonym for Kshatri in this period . Surdas has used the word Rajput for 'Dhruv who was the son of a Kshatriya Raja'.³

Tulsidas, while discussing the duties of the castes in the contemporary society mentions Brahmans (Biprs)⁴, Vaishya (Bayasn)⁵, Sudra (Sudru)⁶ and for kshatriya he has used the word 'Nrapati' (or king) :

सोक्षि नृपति जो नीति न जाना । बेहि न प्रजा प्रिय प्रान समाना ।।⁷

1. Kabir Granthawali, p.376,v.11.

2. Ibid, p.218, v. 125.

3. Sursagar I, pp. 142-144,v.402 & 403.

4. Manas, p.481, v.171.2

5. Ibid; v. 171.3

Thus the Kshatri, according to Tulsidas was to be well-versed in 'Niti' which includes kingly duties (Raj-dharma), as well as , the defence of righteousness.¹ The ruler, as is evident from the above verse,² was required to look upon the people as his children and being as dear to him as his own life.

Tulsidas, thus, equated the ruler with Kshatriyas.³ It was the duty of the kshatris to expand their territories by means of war.⁴ He also refers to the practise of returning the kingdom to the defeated ruler, after forcing him to pay a tribute.⁵

The Rajputs or 'Raja-putras' were the Kshatriyas- has been established by the literature of, as early as, twelfth century India.⁶ One of the most outstanding social phenomena of the early medieval period was the rise of the rajaputras or rajputs with highly exalted notions of Kshatriyahood and chivalry.⁷ Moreover, by the twelfth century, their thirty-six clans, having acquired great renown in the Northern India, had become traditional.⁸

1. Manas, p.481, v.171.2

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Manas, p.150, v.153.3 & 153.4

5. Ibid.; also, Savitri Chandra, II, p.93

6. Yadav, p.32

7. C.V.Vaidya II, p.3; Also, R.C. Majumdar(The Classical Age) p.153.

Colonel Tod¹ and Crooke² tried to prove that the Rajputs were the descendants of the Scythic people of Central Asia, who had come into India in large numbers in earlier times. Bhandarkar has also upheld the theory of the foreign descent of the Rajputs.³ However, reacting against the foreign origin theories, C.V.Vaidya has attempted to prove that the Rajputs were the purest Kshatriyas 'the most chivalrous representatives of the Vedic Aryans in India'.⁴ More or less, the same view has been held by G.H. Ojha,⁵ who has, however, tried in a way to harmonise the indigenous and the foreign origin theories.⁶

However, one thing is clear that, the appearance and rise into prominence of the Rajputs on the Indian scene, Synchronised with the feudalistic tendencies announcing their fuller import.⁷ Then, again, the growing rigidity of the caste system during the post Gupta period may also have helped to a considerable extent in the solidification of the Rajput clans.⁸

1 & 2 . Tod, Annals Ed. Crooke; I, Introduction & ch.2,3 & 6.

3. Bhandarkar, I. A, Vol. XL (1911)

4. C.V. Vaidya, Medieval Hindu India, II, ch.I, p.5.

5. G.H. Ojha, Rajputana ka Itihas, I, p.49.

6. Yadav, p.33.

7. Ibid, p.34, Also, ch.3.

8. Ibid.

Thus, among the kshattris, there were a number of sub-castes or clans :

चन्देलिनि ठैकन्ह पगु ठारा । - - - - - 1

Here, Jayasi refers to the lady of the Chandel clan of this martial race. It seems, this was, a contemporary Rajput clan.² But, this has not been mentioned by Colonel Tod in his list of the thirty- six Rajput clans.³ However, we do get reference of the Chandels in 1202 A.D., when the forces of Muizuddin Mohammed Ghori, under Aibak and Iltutmish invaded their country and captured Kalinjar.⁴ Then again after a brief period, they were subdued once more in 1232 A.D.,⁵ They, however, continued as local chieftains till the fourteenth century.⁶

Similarly, Jayasi also refers to the Chauhan lady or the 'Chauhani':

- - - - - । खली चौहानी होइ जनकारा ।⁷

Jayasi, in fact, is all praise for the Chauhans in general,⁸ and, for the Chauhans of Chittor, in particular :

कुल पूछा चौहान कुलीना । रतन न बाधि होइ मलीना ।⁹

1. Padmavat; p.177,v.185; Also, pp.532-533,v.503.

2. Varn Ratnakar, p.31.

3. Tod, (Ed. Crooke) I, Chart after p.98; Also, II. ch.7.

4. E & D., II, pp. 231-232.

5. Raverty : Tabkat-i-Nasiri, pp.732-733.

6. Bhartiya Itihas Kosh; pp.142-143.

7. Padmavat; p.177,v.185 also, pp.532-533,v.503.

8. Padmavat; p.255, v.268.

9. Padmavat; p. 259, v. 273.

We find the reference of the Chauhans, in the lists of both Colonel Tod¹ and Varn Ratnakar². We can trace their rise to the period following the death of Harsha. Their capital was Ajmer. After the defeat of Prithvi Raj Chauhan by Mohammad Ghori in the second battle of Tarain in 1192 A.D.³, they declined politically.⁴ And, the Chauhans of Malwa were defeated and vanquished by the Muslims in 1401 A.D.⁵

Apart from the above two clans, Jayasi has also mentioned other sub-castes or clans of the Rajputs in his Padmavat, though, there has been some confusion and, he refers to the clans which are not mentioned by any historical work :

रतनसेनि धितर मँह साजा । आइ कृषाई पँठ सब राजा ।

तोंवर बेस पँवार जो आइ । बी गहिलोत आइ सिर नाइ ।⁶

In the above verse, Jayasi, mentions the Tomars, Baes, Parmar or Pawar and Guhilots also as the clans of the Rajputs. We do not find the Tomars listed either in Tod⁷ or Varn Ratnakar⁸

1. Tod, I, chart after p.98.

2. Varn Ratnakar, p. 31; Also, p.61.

3. G.H. Ojha, Rajputane' ka Itihas, I, p.270; Raverty, I, p.468.

4. Bhartiya Itihas kosh; p. 158.

5. Ibid;

6. Padmavat; p.532, v. 503

7. Refer f.n. 1 above; Also II, ch.7.

8. Varn Ratnakar, p.31.

as a clan of the Rajputs. They were just mentioned in the Bhartiya Itihas kosh as the rulers of Delhi in the Eleventh century.¹ The Bes or Bais have been mentioned in Tod's list,² as well as, in the Varn Ratnakar as Vaisa.³ G.H. Ojha considers them⁴ to be the Rajputs of the Bainswara region of the Oudh.⁵

The 'Pawar' or 'Parmars' of Malwa were also famous,⁶ listed both by Tod⁷ and Varn Ratnakar⁸. Similarly, we find references of the Guhilots of Medpat or Mewar, even in the contemporary historical works of the sixteenth century. Babar refers to the Battle of Khanua that he fought against their leader Rana Sanga.⁹ Tod lists them as Grahilot or Gohilot.¹⁰ Whereas, in Varn Ratnakar, we find them mentioned as 'Guhalaute'.¹¹

1. Bhartiya Itihas kosh, p. 192.

2. Tod, I, chart after p.98, Also II, ch.7.

3. Varn Ratnakar, p.31.; Also, Crooke, 'The Tribes and Castes of North - Western Provinces & Oudh, I, p.118.

4. G.H. Ojha, Rajputane ka Itihas, pp.137-144.

5. Ibid; p.144.

6. Ibid; pp.170-213; Also Nainsi, I, 21/2; Also Bhartiya Itihas kosh, p.233.

7. Refer f.n. 2 above.

8. Refer f.n. 2 above.

9. Babar Nama; pp.544-545; Also pp.547-574.

10. Refer f.n. 7 above.

11. Refer f.n. 8 above.

Similarly, we find their reference in Tabakat-I-Akbari¹.

Jayasi, however, continues with his list :

खत्री औ पंचवान बघेले । अगरवार चौहान बंदेले ।
गहरवार परिहार सो कुरी । मिलन हंस ठकुराई कुरी ।
आगे ठाढ़े बजावहिं हाड़ी । पीछे धवा मरन के काढ़ी ।²

The 'Khatri' mentioned above, seems to be 'Khatri', a clan of the Rajputs, as Tod lists them as 'Kathi'³ and in Varn Ratnakar, we have 'khatimana'⁴ or 'Khatri'⁵. We find the reference of the Baghels only in G.H. Ojha's Rajputane ka Itihas.⁶ There is no reference of any 'Agrawar' clan of Rajputs in any earlier, contemporary or later historical source. Similarly, there is no mention anywhere of the 'Panch Ban' or 'Milan Hans' clans.⁷ The 'Gaharwars' and 'Parihars' have been mentioned by Tod⁸ but not in Varn Ratnakar. Similarly, we do not find any reference to 'Hadis' as a Rajput clan. They have, however, been mentioned as a lower caste in Varn Ratnakar.⁹

Thus, from the above description and analysis, we can safely come to a conclusion, that, apart from the Guhilots¹⁰

1. E & D ; V ; pp. 324-328, Also, pp. 398-399.

2. Padmavat; pp.532-533, v. 503.

3. Tod, I, Chart after p.98, Also, II, ch.7.

4. Varn Ratnakar, p. 31.

5. Ibid; p. 61.

6. Ojha, Rajputane ka Itihas, I, p.226; Also Nainsi, I, 22/1.

7. Padmavat; p.533, f.n. 3 & 4.

8. Refer f.n. 3 above.

9. Varn Ratnakar; p.1, Also Sachau, I, pp.102-103.

10. Babar Nama, pp. 544-574, Also, Refer f.n. 1 above.

and Chauhans¹, We find the Rajput clans receding into political oblivion. They may have survived somehow, socially and, that is why, they were mentioned by Jayasi. But, they were almost in an anarchic state, having lost their political powers :

राज समाज कुसाज कोटि कटु कल्पित कलुष कुचात नई है ।²

The 'Vaishyas'

In very early ages, Vaishyas were equated with the Shudras.³ But, at that time, it appears to have been mainly due to religious bias and the considerations of ritual purity.⁴ The conventional idea of the regular means of livelihood for the Vaishya, consisted of agriculture, trade and cattle-rearing,⁵ but, at one place, Parashar has recommended 'krsi', 'vaniya' and 'Silpa' for Vaishyas as well as Shudras.⁶ This trend, as a matter of fact, continued right upto the middle ages - with the close approximation of, at least, the lower strata of the Vaishyas to the Shudras, which was noticed even by Al-Beruni.⁷ In the early medieval period, that

1. Bahar Nama, p. 573.

2. Vinay Patrika, pp. 230-231, v. 139.

3. Sharma R.S., 'Shudras in Ancient India', p. 281.

4. Yadav, p.82.

5. Ibid. p. 11.

6. Parashar, 'Achar-khand' 2.13.

7. Al-Beruni (ab.), p. 47, Also, Sachau, I, p.101.

is, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, this was partly, due to the improvement in the social and economic status of the Shudras.¹

But, it is also obvious, that, it was partly, due to the sinking down of, at least, the lower strata of the Vaishya class, in the social scale - due (also) to the socio-economic changes evident in this period.² Max Weber has regarded them as freemen in the ancient times.³ But, the emergence of landed aristocracy as a result of foreign invasions⁴ and the attendant confusion and chaos, the creation of landed intermediaries and the decline of trade and commerce during the post- Gupta period, were the major factors responsible for this state of affairs.⁵ But the comparative development of trade and commerce, once more, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, led to the emergence of a prosperous section of Vaishyas.⁶ And, thus, with this growth, emerged the tendency of regarding the Vaishyas only, or, at least, mainly, as a class of merchants and traders,⁷ and the concomitant improvement in their status.⁸

1. Yadav, pp. 11 - 12.

2. Ibid.

3. Max Weber, 'The Religion of India', p. 55.

4. Hazra, Puranic Records, p.208 and p.216.

5. Yadav; p. 12.

6. Ibid.

7. Derett., p. 74.

8. '84 Vaishnavon ki Varta', pp.38-39, refers to a Brahman willing to do the work of the Vaishya ('Vaishya vritti') for livelihood instead of begging for alms.

Turning to the Sixteenth Century, we find a reference in Tulsidas, regarding the Mercantile caste, that is, the Vaishyas, who were very rich :

धनिक बनिक बर धनद समाना । बैठे सकल बस्तु लै नाना ॥

चौहट सुंदर गलीं सुहाई । संतत रहहि सुगंध सिंघाई ॥ ¹

He calls them 'Banik'. Thus, it seems, that, business-men were then, generally, known by this name. They used to decorate their shops in the market-place and especially near the crossings of roads. The lanes of the market place, thus, used to be full of the smell of the perfumes and scents,² which were used to add to the shop's grandeur and to attract the customers.

In the medieval period, the word generally used for business- transactions is 'Baniḡ' :

या बन में तुम बनिज करति हो, नहि जानति मोकों घरबारो ॥

भे मन में अनुमान करो' नित , मोसों केहे बनिज पसारो । ³

Kabirdas has referred to the caste involved in business or 'Baniḡ',⁴ as 'Baniya':

उठि उठि बणि्या रे करि लै बणिज सबारा रे ।⁵

1. Manas ; p. 202, v. 212.2

2. Ibid.

3. SurSagar, I, p.788, v. 2142.

4. Kabir Granthawali; p. 285, v. 32.

5. Ibid.

As far as the term 'Baniya' is concerned, it has also been referred to, by Jayasi in his Padmavat-though, indirectly :

बनिनि अल सेंदूर दे मांगा । - - - - - ।

In the above line, the lady of the 'Baniya' caste is being referred to. Thus, it is evident that, in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries (the period of the works quoted above, respectively), this caste was also called 'Baniya'- a term used quite often even today:

हम भई बनवारिनि, आपुन भर दानी कुंवर कन्हई ॥
कहा बनिज धौं है आई हम, जाको मांगत दान ।²

In this above-mentioned verse, Surdas refers to the members of this caste as 'Banijaras', that is, those who do 'Banij' or trade. He has, however, used the word 'Banijarini', that is, the feminine of 'Banijara'. It is evident from these analyses, that in the Medieval period, 'Banik' or 'Banij' or 'Banijaras' were the names by which the merchants and shopkeepers were known. Jayasi also refers to the traders as

-
1. Padmavat; p. 177, v. 185.
 2. Sursagar, I, p. 800, v. 2185.

'Banijaras' :

चितउर गढ़ का एक बनिबारा । - - - - - 1

But , he has used the word 'Mahajan' for the shop-keepers :

हुनि देखि सिधत की हाटा । नवी सिद्धि सछिमी सब बाटा ।
कनक हाट सब कुँहकुँह लीपी । बैठ महाजन सिधत दीपी ।²

These Mahajans, seem to have kept their shops in the market-place. Tulsidas has also used this term in his Manas :

बहुति महाजन सकल बोसाए । - - - - - 3

We find that, there were certain sub-groups or sub-castes amongst the mercantile community or 'Banik' too. There were, 'Bajajs', who dealt in cloth or were cloth-merchants and 'Sarraf's', who dealt in Gold and Silver ;

बैठे बजाव सराफ बनिक अनेक मनहुँ कुबेर ते ।⁴

Jayasi has also referred to the 'Sarraf' as a constituent of the Mahajans.⁵

'Agrawarini' or the feminine of Agrawar or Agrawal

1. Padmavat; pp. 73-74, v. 74.

2. Ibid; p.37, v. 37; Also, Mrigavati, pp.72-73,v.207 & p.272, v. 314.

3. Manas; p.263, v. 286.2; Also, Mrigavati,p.319,V.370 &pp.172-173, v. 207.

4. Manas, p.947, v. 27.5.

5. Padmavat; p. 37, v. 37.

is referred to, in another verse of Jayasi:

अगरवादिनि गज गवन करेई । बैसिनि पाव हंस गति देई ।¹

That the Agrawals existed then, too, as a sub-group of the merchants or Vaishyas is, thus, evident from their reference in Padmavat.

The merchants in Medieval India, used to travel from one place (e.g. Chittorgarh) to another (e.g. Singhal Deep) for the purposes of trade- transactions :

चित्तउर गढ़ क एक बनिजारा । सिंघल दीप बला बेजारा ।²

Another contemporary poet, Kabirdas, too, refers to the distant trade :

देस भला परिलोक बिराना । - - - - - 3

He further states that, after their transactions in one place, the merchants, generally, left for another place, carrying their goods :

बेगे हो तुम लाद लदाना ।

बौघट घाट रे बस्ताना दूरि पयाना रे ॥⁴

1. Padmavat ; p. 177, v. 185

2. Ibid; pp.73-74, v.74.

3. Kabir Granthawali, p.285, v- 32.

4. Ibid.

The members of the merc-antile caste were, free to travel for business purposes. There were, in fact, no restrictions imposed on their entry in other states or countries. They could traverse the alien lands, as there seems to be no territorial boundary for them.¹ It also appears that, as soon as one entered a city or neared a fort, the king's guards would question his entry. They ask, specifically, if one is a mendicant (a 'Jogi') or a trader (a 'Banijara') :

उत्तरि बसिठ दुई आई जोहारे । के तुम्ह जोगी के बनिजारे ।

भई राजारसु आगे छेह । यह गढ़ छाड़ि अनत होई मेह ।²

It seems that only traders were permitted in the cities- there were no restrictions on their movements and trade- transactions. He could trade in whatever article he desired, and was free to pursue his trade-transactions in whatever manner he liked :

हहु बनिजार तो बनिज बेसाहहु । भरि बेपार लेहु जो चाहहु ।³

Probably, much of the inland trade' was carried on, through the net-work of the rivers, as there is a specific mention of the word 'Ghat' :

1. Padmavat; p.209, v. 218.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

बगे हो लुम लाद लदानां ।

औघट घाट रे बलनां दूरी पयानां रे ।।¹

Thus, it appears that, after dealing at one place- with their merchandise laden (on a boat) , they would leave for another place on the river-course and embank there. That is why the word 'Ghat' or river- bank has been specifically mentioned here.² It is also clear that the merchants used to travel far and wide.³

While referring to the trade transactions, kabir talks only of 'profitable business' or 'Chokho Bani' - a prevalent view which was the guiding factor of all trade activities in the medieval Indian society :

बोली बनव डयो प्रान र करीषे ।⁴

Naturally then, as now, the motive of this section of the society was to earn maximum profit from their transactions.

And, it needed real 'business sense' to enable a merchant, to differentiate the profitable transaction from a non-profitable one. Otherwise, even the principal amount may

1. Kabir Granthawali ; p. 285, v. 32.

2. Ibid; Also, Mrigavati, p. 93, v. 116 & 118; pp.129-130,v.159.

3. Refer f.n. 1 above.

4. Ibid.

be lost in the process of trade - transaction :

सरा न छोटा ना परिछाना ।

साहे कारनि रे सब मूल हिराना रे ॥

सकस दुनी में लोभ पियारा ।

मूल ज राखे रे साई बणिबारा रे ॥¹

Thus, it is evident, that , sensible trader was one, who had this sense of balance. The true merchant never lost the principal amount, in his greed for excess profit. In all given conditions, he was a clever trader, who was able to save his principal amount.²

Kabir das is also of the view that according to the prevalent view he was a poor trader, who was unable to prevent his principal from diminishing and the interest on the borrowed principal from increasing :

मेरे असे बनिज सौं कवन काज ।

मूल घटे सिरि बधे ड्याज ॥³

Thus, it appears that, lending of money on interest was also a prevalent form of business in the Medieval Indian Society.

1. Kabir Granthawali, p. 285, v. 32.

2. Ibid, p. 364, v. 6.

3. Ibid, p. 372 v. 6.

So it was assumed that, clever traders never permitted these interests on the borrowed sums to increase !

It appears from the perusal of the contemporary literature, that the market place has been referred to as 'Hat':
 बहुरि महाजन सकल बीलाए । आइ सबन्हि सादर सिर नाए ॥
 हाट बाट मंदिर सुखासा । नगर सँवारहु घरिहुँ पासा ॥¹

Even Jayasi has used this term to describe the market, in his Padmavat :

हाट बाट सिंघस सब जँह देखिअ तँह रात ।²

Even, Kabirdas has used the term 'Hat' for market. As a matter of fact, 'Hat' is a term in vogue even today, to describe the market-place and, especially, in rural India :

जब लग देखी हाट पसारा ।

उठि उठि बणिया रे करि सै बणिम सबारा रे ।³

It can be , further inferred that, the merchants surveyed the whole market first- made an assessment and , it was then only, that they proceeded with their transactions. Trade transactions were always preceded by an evaluation of the

1. Manas; p. 263, v. 286.2

2. Padmavat; p. 37, v. 37 ; Also, p. 261, v. 275.

3. Kabir Granthawali p. 285, v. 32.; Also Madhu Malti, p.102, v.441.

market conditions and market- prices in any given market.

However, the term 'Bazar' (due to the impact of the Persian language) was gradually gaining currency and popularity, as a synonym of the market or 'Hat' :

घोषहिं मांडी घोहटे , उरघ उरघ बाजार ।¹

And, even Tulsidas uses the word to describe the market-place :

रघहु मंजु मनि घोकें धारु । कहहु बनावन बोगी बजारु ।।²

The Shudras :

The fourth Varn of the Shudras was, not at all, a homogeneous caste but a vast heterogeneous community.³ In the twelfth century Indian society, this varn comprised majority of agricultural labourers and petty peasants; artisans and craftsmen, and, also, some vendors; manual workers, servants and attendants ; and those following low occupations.⁴ They were, thus, according to their profession, again sub- divided into several caste groups.⁵

1. Kabir, Granthawali, p.6, v.31.

2. Manas; p. 338, v. 5.4.

3. Yadav, p. 38.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

Professor R.S. Sharma, however, points out that the extensive use of iron, especially from the Gupta period onwards, led to the transformation of Shudra slaves, Karmakaras and the aboriginal peoples into cultivators.¹ Moreover, in the early medieval period, the decline of the Vaishyas² and the levelling down of the lower strata of this caste to the status of Shudras,³ is another factor, to be taken into consideration. As a result, there appears to have taken place, a considerable accession of the Vaishyas to the class of Shudras.⁴ It resulted in a number of changes in the societal organization by the eleventh and twelfth centuries India.⁵ For example, the social status of the weavers has changed (rather improved) from the earlier Shudras⁶ to the 'Antyajas' as described by Al-Beruni.⁷ On the other hand, the 'Dombas and the Charmakaras'⁸ came to be regarded as untouchable

1. R.S. Sharma, 'Shudras In Ancient India; p. 234

2. Yadav; p. 41.

3. Al-Beruni (ab.) p.47; 'Between the latter two classes there is not very great distance'.

4. Yadav; p.41.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Sachau, p. 46.

8. Yadav, (p.49) believes that there is no evidence of their being so till the Gupta period.

by the twelfth century.¹ There was, generally, an increase in the list of the untouchables. The 'Chandals' continued to be regarded as untouchables during this period.² Even, Kalhan reveals that the horror of untouchability had increased in his age.³ Actually, the contempt for the occupations of primary production which were carried on by the Shudras, and, from which, the superior class had withdrawn itself, was another factor responsible for this.⁴

There were, it seems, two groups of Shudras in the traditional Hindu society.⁵ The first were the 'Anirvasit Shudra' which included all the karmakaras or the craftsmen, whose responsibility was to serve the upper three castes⁶. The second category included the 'Nirvasit shudras', who were in fact, considered outside the Varna- system and, thus, untouchables⁷. This second group included the 'Chamars', 'Chandals' and 'Svapach'.

1. Yadav; p.49.

2. Ibid.

3. Rajtarangini (Eng.tr.) p. xxix.

4. Yadav; p. 50.

5. Savitri Chandra, 'Samaj Aur Sanskriti'; p.6.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

The Hindi literature of the sixteenth century is replete with the references of the lower caste. For example, Surdas refers to them, in his SurSagar :

सुदराज इहि अंतर जायो । - - - - - ।

- - - - -

- - - - - । सुद नृपति कतिहुग करि लेहयो ।¹

And, among the Shudras, 'Dom' appears to be the lower sub-caste. And, Surdas makes it amply clear that they are lowly-born :

ओछी जात डोम के घर की , - - - - -²

The 'Doms' were, in fact, totally segregated and isolated from the society and many stories were concocted to prove this fact that, even the Moon has been defamed by their association. And, things which were pure and of pristine glory, were de-glorified by associating with the 'Doms' or the low-borns :

जों उजियार चाँद होइ उई । बदन कसक डोंव के छुई ।³

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Jayasi, in his another work of the same period, that is, 'Aakhri Kalam' has used the same story but, he used the word 'Chandal' instead of 'Dom'. It seems that, these two were of the same caste-group, if not synonymous words.⁴

1. SurSagar, I, pp. 94-96, v. 290.

2. Ibid.

3. Padmavat; pp. 452-543, v. 441.

4. Jayasi Granthawali; p. 340, v. 5.

Kabirdas also refers to the 'Chandals' in his poetry :

- - - - - , बेसनों मिले घंठाल ।¹

Tulsidas, another contemporary poet, however, refers to the lowly borns as 'Svapach' :

स्वपच सबर उस जमन जहुँ पाँवर कोल किरात ।²

The Shudras were also kept in government service, that is employed by the State as sweepers and scavengers.³

They were also employed to torture the prisoners in the medieval period, as referred to, by Jayasi in his Padmavat :

बीछी साँप जानि तँह मेले । बाँका जानि छ्वावहिं हेले ।
दहकही सँखी छुटहिं नारी । राति देवस दुख गजन भारी ।⁴

They would, thus, brand the prisoners with red-hot iron sticks or with knives having crooked angles, to inflict inhuman torture.

The 'Helas' by now seems, to have been established as a sub-caste of the Shudras.⁵

1. Kabir Granthawali, p. 90, v. 9.

2. Manas, p.500, v. 194,; Also, p. 1015, v. 99.3

3. Al-Beruni (ab.), p.47.

4. Padmavat; pp.631-632, v. 580, Also, pp.703-704, v.642.

5. Padmavat, pp.631-632, v. 580; Also p.632, f.n. 4.

There has been some impact of the Bhakti movement on the contemporary Medieval Indian Society, especially of its second and more explosive phase (that is, from the thirteenth to sixteenth century).¹ As a result of this, the Shudras, tried to enter into a debate with the Brahmins and claimed themselves to be as superior as the latter :

बादहिं सुठु द्विषहं सन हम तुम्ह ते कहु घाटि ।
बानह ब्रह्म सो बिप्रवर ओहि देखावहिं हाटि ॥ ²

It appears, that they considered knowledge as a means of social mobility. By acquiring it, they could claim the other. Another means for social mobility was attainment of wealth :

धनवत कुलीन मलीन अपी । - - - - - ³

Thus, it is evident that by the means of the acquired wealth, they could climb up the social ladder and could be considered 'Kuleen' or of the higher castes.

1. Yusuf Hussain (Hindi Transl.) p.5.

2. Manas, p.1014, v. 99 (kh)

3. Manas, p.1016, v. 100.4

But, still, as far as the Hindu philosophy was concerned, it pre-supposed that the 'Shudras' had no right to salvation. Not only that, a man who lacked knowledge and common sense, that is, one who was a Shudra mentally also, could not aspire for salvation - for, he was incapable of recognizing the God :

सुद म्लेच्छ बसै मन माँही । आत्मराम सु चीन्हा नाही ॥ ¹

There are chances that the nomenclature 'Harijan' for the down-trodden (Caste-wise) may have been first used by the poets of the Bhakti period and, it was then only that, it came in vogue. For example, in the very first verse of his 'Sakhi', Kabir mentions the word 'Harijan' - though, it implies, basically, a 'bhakt' but, since, Kabir also used the word 'Jati' after 'Harijan'; it seems, that he meant the lowest caste by this nomenclature :

हरि जी सवां न को हितु, हरिजन सई न जाति ॥ ²

A 'bhakt' - even if he was of the lowest caste, was to be treated at par with the other Vaishnavs ;

---, बैसनो मिले बंढाल ।

अक माल दे भेंटिये , जानू मिले गोपाल ॥ ³

1. Kabir Granthawali, p. 255, v. 29.

2. Ibid; p.1, v. 1

3. Ibid , p. 90 v, 9.

Thus, for the poets of the sixteenth century, 'bhakti' seemed to be the most effective vehicle for upward social mobility, because the 'bhakts' always met as equals. There was no caste- considerations in their social intercourse- which, however, was not only restricted- but, to an extent, prohibited :

रामसनेही यूँ मिले , दुनूँ बरन गमाइ ॥¹

Dadu Dayal, however, refuted the theory of the Varna-system altogether :

आदि अंत सब एक हैं , दादू सहज समाइ ।²

Dadu goes to the extent of comparing the untouchables with the tongue and teeth inside the mouth. Since, they were not objecting to the latter, people were wrong in treating the lowest caste as untouchables:

दादू हाड़ी मुख करा , चाम रह्यो लिपटाइ ।
माँही जिह्वा माँस की ताही सेती छाइ ॥³

1. Kabir Granthawali; p.92, v. 9.

2. Sri Dadu Vani, 13/87; Also 13/116.

3. Ibid; 10/86.

As a matter of fact, according to the bhakt-poets of the medieval India, all those who were wise or had acquired knowledge were equals and were of the same 'jati' or caste :

सबे सयाने एकमत , तिनकी एके जात ।¹

But, as the above verses infer, even Dadu Dayal, recognized the Varna system as abominable and, that is why, he had opposed it. And, though Dadu recognized the essentiality of the varna- system, he has not mentioned it directly.²

In the sixteenth Century India, the people from the upper caste were neither supposed to partake meals or inter-marry with those of the lower castes, that is, the Shudras.³ And maintaining the caste- distinction through or, on the basis of food habits has been referred to, by Kabirdas even :

कबीर गुर गरवा मिल्या , रसि गया जाटें लूण ।
जाति पाँति कूल सब मिटे, नाउं घरोगे कोण ॥⁴

1. Sri Dadu Vani, 13/164.

2. Savitri Chandra, p.19.

3. SurSagar II, p. 318, v. 3770.

4. Kabir Granthawali, 'Sakhi' p.3, v.14.

Thus, to lay stress on the caste- distinction, a custom was evolved - the food was kept devoid of salt to stress this caste - distinction. If salt was added to the flour meant for preparing meals, it was supposed to result in a loss of caste. The caste- system had, thus, rigidified to such an extent that, Tulsidas praises a worthless Brahman in comparison of a virtuous Shudra, only on the grounds of the caste- superiority of the Brahman :

पूजिय बिग्र सीत गुनहीना । सुद्र न गुन गन ज्ञान प्रवीना ।¹

Thus, it is evident, that despite the non- descriptions of the caste- system, the poets of medieval India were, in fact, challenging it. It did exist and that too, with all its rigidity and inter-caste restrictions- even, in social intercourse. The lower castes were, in fact, condemned as not having any caste at all :

तू बृषभानु बड़े की बेटी , उनके जाति न पाँति ।²

A myth was associated with this restriction, It was thought that by mixing with the lower castes may result in the loss of one's high-caste status or the lowering of its prestige :

सुता बड़े बृषभानु की , कुल सीवनहारी ।³

1. Manas; p.664, v. 33.1

2. SurSagar, I, p.848, v. 2326.

3. Ibid., p.847, v. 2324.

Surdas, another poet of this period, had claimed that, by devotion to God or 'Hari' even a svapach (or untouchable) became superior to a non- devotional Brahman.¹ Despite this personal view, Surdas becomes impartial in describing the contemporary society where intermingling was never fostered or even favoured.² And, it was, ultimately, the social supremacy of the Brahmans which was never challenged and in comparison to the glass (Kanch) Shudra, he was Gold (kanchan) ³, Or , if the Sudra was a crow, then he was a Swan;⁴ and so the Brahmans were considered to be superior socially.

1. SurSagar, I, p. 76, v. 233.

2. Ibid, II, p.318, v. 3770.

3. Ibid,

4. Ibid.

The Tribal Groups

Any study of the Indian Social system is incomplete till, we mention the tribal groups as a part of the complex-~~wider~~ social order¹ and, that, too, of the Medieval times. A tribe, basically, is in an ideal state, a self- continued unit. It constitutes a society in itself.²

The Varn Ratnakar gives a long list of the aboriginal tribes. He differentiates between the tribes of the forest which includes, 'Koca, Kirala, Kolha, Bhila, Sasa, Pulinda, Saca(Va)ra, Chairanga, Mleksha, Gontha, Vota, Nela, Pahalia, Podha, Donavara, Sagava, Vantara etc'³ and the tribes of the hilly regions which, in turn, included 'Gonda, Palagonda, Sabara, Kirata, Babbara, Bhilla, Pukkasa, Pancari, Meda, Mangara, etc.'⁴ As a matter of fact, the term 'mleccha' meaning impure was applied to these peoples and tribes as they were outside the pale of the traditional culture.⁵

1. Bottomore, 'Sociology', pp.106-107.

2. Andre Beteille (R. Thapar ed. 'Tribe, Caste and Religion in India'); pp.7-8.

3. Varn Ratnakar ; p.37.

4. Ibid; p.42.

5. Yadav, p.56.

That, the tribes existed separately, though, alongwith the castes and classes in the plural Hindu Society of the Medieval ages, is evident from the fact that, they have been referred to, separately by the Hindi literateurs of the sixteenth century.

The most conspicuous tribal group was that of the 'Bhils'. The reference to 'Bhillini' or a woman of the Bhil tribe has been made by Surdas :

भिल्लिनि के फल छाप भाव सों छटे - मीठे छारे ।¹

Kabirdas also refers to them in his Granthawali :

भजन कौ परताप ऐसो, तिरै जल पाछान ।

अधम भील अजाति गनिका , चढ़ै जात बिमान ।²

They were treated as much lower down in the contemporary social order and, for their salvation, too, 'Bhakti Marg' (Bhajan etc.) was the only way. Even, Surdas has recommended the same for the aboriginal tribes and in almost identical words :

भजन कौ परताप ऐसो, जल तरे पाछान ।

अजातिल अरु भील गनिका, चढ़ै जात बिमान ।³

1. Sur Sagar; pp.8-9, v.25.

2. Kabir Granthawali; pp.325-326, v.2.

3. Sur Sagar, I, p.76, v. 235.

Surdas in one of his poems 'Pruthu Avtar' referred to an old Puranic story, wherein after his arrival, Pruthu is granted the kingdom, which had originally belonged to the tribals :

जाँघ के मये हैं पुरुष परगट भयो ,

स्याम तिहिं भीत कौ राज दीन्हो ।¹

The above points out to the systematic spread of the imperialism in the sixteenth century even in the aboriginal lands till then, left untouched by the various conquerors and kings.

While, referring to the story of 'Ajamil' a Brahman of Kannauj, Surdas exploited the opportunity in discussing the inter-marriages between the highest caste of the Varn-system and, those placed outside its pale and perview.:

अजामिल बिपु कनौज निवासी । सो भयो बृहली के गृहवासी ।

जाति - पाति तिन सब बिसराई । भच्छ-अभच्छ सबे सो खाई ।

ता भीतिनि के दस सुत भए । - - - - - ।²

It seems, that such types of marriages were not totally unknown in the medieval India.

1. Sur Sagar; I, pp.144-146, v. 405.

2. Ibid, pp.155-157, v. 415.

Tulsidas, a very prominent poet of the sixteenth century, mentions the other tribes alongwith Bhils, those who inhabit the forests like the 'Kols' and the 'Kirats'.

कोल किरात भिल्ल बनवासी । - - - - - 1

They existed alongwith the civilized Hindu Society, by shifting to outside the periphery or the civil limits of their towns and villages :

राम सकल बनधर तब तोषे । - - - - - 2

That, they existed alongwith the 'Varna-ashram' based Hindu societal organization has been brought forth by Tulsidas himself, who refers to the tribal groups alongwith the people, who had left their abodes as 'Vanprasthas' or the ascetics living in the forests and meditating :

मितहिं किरात कोल बनवासी । बैखानस बटु जती उदासी ॥³

Thus, we find ample evidence of the presence of the tribals like 'Bhils, kols and kirats'⁴ in the Medieval Indian Society through the writings of the contemporary poets. But, apart from them there are references of other tribal groups :

स्वपच खर खस जमन जहं पावैर कोल किरात ।⁵

Or,
कोल,खस, भील, जवनादि खल राम कहि, नीच हवै ऊँ पद को न पायो ।⁶

1. Manas; p.550, v.249.1.

2. Ibid; p.451, v.137; Also, p.526, v. 222.4

3. Manas; p.527, v.223.2.

4. Ibid ; p.529, v.225.5 (or Chhand after v,225)

Thus, we find that 'khabar', 'Khas' and 'Panwar' etc. were some other tribal groups which existed in the medieval times. Apart from them, we also find a reference to 'Khasiya' and 'Magar' tribes in the Padmavat of Jayasi :

हैका गढ़ जोरा अस कीहा । खसिया मगर सुरंग तेह दीन्हा ।¹

It seems, that these were the martial tribes forming units of the contemporary armies. These were the mountainous tribesmen, adept in breaking easily, the huge blocks of mountains.² Therefore, in the medieval Indian armies, they were employed to break the outer-wall of the fort or, to strip these forts of their embellishments of further strength. It also appears that these tribal groups, lived in the most primitive manner and led almost an under-nourished life. They did not adhere to an established religious life led by the Hindus and indulged only in evil things.³ (According to the accepted norms of behaviour).

The tribal groups mentioned above, lived in the forests. They survived on 'fruits, honey, germinating seeds and the edible roots of various plants'.⁴ Further, leaf-utensils were

1. Padmavat, pp.559-560, v. 525.

2. Ibid; p. 560, f.n. 1.

3. Manas, p.551, v.250.1 & v. 250.3.

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4. Manas, p.550, v. 249.1.

used by them for keeping the edibles while eating.¹

Their standard of living, so to say, was almost at the subsistence level and they were, generally, considered primitive and ignorant :

यह हमारी अति बड़िं सेवकाई । लेहि न बासन बसन घोरार्ह ॥
हम जड़ जीव जीव गन छाती । कुटिल कुबालि कुमति कुजाति ॥²

They were, thus, treated as thieves and creatures without emotions or feelings, who existed on the animals of the forests, for their food. However, they were regarded as shrewds and rogues.³ Further, they were considered to be of the lowest rank in the societal organization.⁴

1. Manas, p.550, v. 249.1.

2. Manas, p.551, v. 250.2.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

CHAPTER II

The Social Classes

Or

The Occupational Castes

The traditional Dharmashastra ideal envisaged different occupation for the different Varns. But, the actual state of affairs was somewhat different. The political functions became all the more complicated with the political supremacy of the Turks in North India at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century.¹

It may be noted here that in the context of 'Varndharm', the normative social theory assigned the professions in terms of broad categories. Thus, in actual life, even the idea of these four major castes began to signify a level of generality,² below which there was great complexity created by a number of sub-sections and small caste groups with varying degrees of social status within each major caste. Among the sub-sections of the last 'Varn', many were distinct occupational groups,

1. Yadav; p.257.

2. Hazra, Puranic Records; p.188.

known as mixed castes of artisans, craftsmen and those following various occupations which were regarded low, apart from the petty peasants, agricultural and other labourers.³

It has been pointed out that, the extensive use of iron, especially from the Gupta period onwards, led to the transformation of Shudra slaves, karmkars and aboriginal peoples into cultivators.⁴ But, soon afterwards, the emergence and growth of the ruling landed aristocracy also synchronised with the growing religio-ethical bias against agriculture and a low estimate of the people associated with it.⁵ Thus, in other feudal societies too, the artisans held a very low position and were considered to be merely an instrument for providing the elite with the luxury goods.⁶

In the medieval Indian society as Al-beruni observed, the Shudras were followed by the people called 'Antyaja', who rendered various kinds of service and were not reckoned among the castes, but only as members of a certain craft or profession.⁷

3. Yadav, p.16.

4. R.S. Sharma, Shudras in Ancient India; p.234.

5. Gideon Sjoberg, the American Journal of Sociology, Vol.LVIII, 1952, No.3. He says : In feudal societies land is held by Chief , political bureaucrats and royal favorites and social and economic status of the peasants declined (pp.232-235).

6. Ibid.

7. Sachau, I, p.101.

And, Al-beruni goes on to give a list of such craftsmen or professionals, which included fuller (washerman), Shoemaker, Juggler, Basket and shield **Maker**, Sailor, Fisherman, Hunter of wild animals and birds and Weaver.⁸

The ancient theory of mixed castes⁹, arising out of miscegenation may have had a sub-stratum of reality at the outset but now it represented a hypothetical explanation of the increasing caste groups in the society.¹⁰ Both Hieun-Tsang¹¹ and Shukr-niti¹² referred to the mixed castes as too numerous to be described. We also find reference to these many mixed castes in the accounts of Al-beruni.¹³

Moreover, apart from this increase in the number of the mixed castes, the advent of the Muslims in India and their impact, is also the reason for a separate study of these occupational castes, which were previously grouped along with the Shudras. The Muslims, in fact, treated the men of skills,

8. Ibid.

9. Kane, Ch.II.

10. Ghurye, G.S., Caste and Class In India, p.107.

11. Watters, p.168.

12. Shukrñiti (Eng.tr.) B.K. Sarkar, p.150.

13. Sachau, I, p. 101.

with respect¹⁴ and patronized craftsmanship liberally, as is evident from the following Persian proverb, which was popular in Medieval India :

Ba-hunar nar

Be-hunar khar.

And , that these socio-economic groups or castes were trying to find an honourable position under the sun is evident from the number of saints that this group produced. Kabirdas was a weaver,¹⁵ Dadu, a village cotton-carder¹⁶ Guru Nanak, a grain merchant,¹⁷ to name a few of these saints that came from these lower classes.¹⁸

That , these new classes were emerging is evident from the writings of the conformist or conventional poet, Tulsidas. According to him, these new classes that have emerged are Varn-Shankars¹⁹:

भए बरन संकर कलि भिन्नसेतु सब लोग ।²⁰

14. Yasin, M. : A social History; pp. 28-29.

15. Dabistan-i-Mazahib, p. 246.

16. Ibid; p.267-268.

17. Ibid; p. 274.

18. Habeeb, Irfan; Mughal Agrarian; p.333.

19. Also, Kane, Dharmshastras, Ch.II.

20. Manas, p.1015, v.100 (kh)

And, it is the new emergent classes, who oppose the traditional path of the vedas and try to form and establish new 'panths' or religious groups :

हुति संमत हरि भक्ति पथ संजुत बिरति बिबेक ।

तेहिं न चलहिं नर मोह बस कल्पहिं पंथ अनेक ॥²¹

And , he goes on to call such people as 'Dhambhi' or full of false pride :

कलिमत भ्रमे धर्म सब लुप्त भए सदगुन्य ।

दंभिनह निज मति कल्पि करि पुगट किए बहु पंथ ॥²²

And, as a result of these socio-religious changes taking place in the medieval Indian Society of the North India, the lower classes or the Surdas now claim equality with the Brahmans :

बादहिं सुदु खिन्न सन हम तुम्ह ते कह्यु पाटि ।

जानइ ब्रह्म सो बिपुबर आसि देसावहिं डाटि ॥²³

Not only that, it appears from the descriptions of Tulsidas that those who did not believe in the traditional Veds and Purans and were treading new paths, only they were being treated as 'Sants' or religious leaders :

नहिं मान पुरान न बेदहि जो । हरि सेवक संत संहो कलि सो ॥²⁴

21. Manas; p.1015, v.100(kh)

22. Ibid; p. 1012, v.97 ()

23. Manas, p.1014, v. 99 ()

24. Manas, p.1016, v. 100.4.

As a result of all these developments, the Varn-based Dharm was being destroyed.²⁵ and, wealth - a vehicle of social mobility in this period²⁶ was the basis of the Medieval socio-religious reform movement.²⁷

The Astrologers :

Astrology was an established branch of learning in the sixteenth century India. This is evident from the fact that the second Mughal Emperor Humayun took keen interest in it.²⁸ There's a mention of Astrologer or Jyotishi' in the SurSagar :

॥ नंदबू ॥ आदि जोतिषी तुम्हरे घर को, पुत्र जन्म सुनि आयो ।

लाल सोधि सब जोतिष गनिके , चाहत तुमहि सुनायो ।²⁹

They were also called 'Ganik' or 'Ganek' , as they did mathematics or 'Ganana :

गणिकन्ह गरह कुंखी कीन्हा, - - - - -³⁰

It seems that, the Brahmins generally took up this profession :

नव गृह बौध्म भगता रासी । - - - - -³¹

25. Manas; p.1012, v. 97.1

26. Ibid; p.1016, v. 100.4.

27. Irfan Habib, Mughal Agrarian System, p.333 However says : "Most of the devotional sects did not, perhaps, ever assume the form of social movements." But at the same time, were however, responsible for fostering some "radical ideas, such as contempt for caste," in "the minds and hearts of the masses,"

28. Humayun Nama, pp.32 and 48.

29 . Sur Sagar, I, p.290, v.704, Also Mirgavati, p.12, v.16.

30 . Medhu Malti, p.102, v.438 & 439; Also Padmavat, pp.93-94, v.96.

31 . Kabir Granthawali, p.226, v.141, Also, Padmavat, pp.122-123, v.127.

Another poet of the sixteenth century has corroborated this fact :

बाँझ बैठि गने सब लागे । रासि गनहिं "दहु" करम सभागे ।³²

The Astrologers were always the first to be consulted on a child's birth :

पंखि औ बुध्दित हंकारे । रासि गनह औ नखत "उन्हारे"
गनि गुनि "पत्रा" देखहु कौन गरह दहु सुद ।³³

And ; it was after a proper study only that, they suggested a name for the child.³⁴

Even before the commencement of journeys etc; they were consulted³⁵

The astrologers then studied the ephimeries or 'Panchang ' or Patra³⁶ gave their consent for the journey. On certain days, however, journeys towards definite directions were prohibited and, this was known as 'Dishashool', that is, prohibition of a journey in a given direction on a said day.³⁷ They were also

32. Mrigavati (Qutbun's), p.12, v.16.

33. Mrigavati, p.11, v.15; Also, pp.120-121, v.149.

34. Ibid; p.12, v.16.

35. Padmavat, p.385, v.381; p.386, v.382, Also, pp.387-388, v.383.

36. Ibid; Also, Mrigavati, p.11, v.15.

37. Ibid.

consulted to fix a date for marriage and other ceremonies too.³⁸

There is detailed description of the twelve zodiac signs³⁹ or 'rasis' and the placement of the various planets or stars or 'Grah' in them.⁴⁰ These planets were, however, nine in number.⁴¹ And, the predictions were made by the astrologers on the permutation and combination of the various planets and the zodiac-signs.⁴² Certain planets similarly have some astronomical or cosmos effect. For example, Jayasi describes the 'lunar eclipse' caused by the combination of Rahu and Moon.⁴³

That, the astrologers existed as a separate professional group is evident as they eked their living from this profession. They were liberally rewarded and paid, whenever consulted by anyone.⁴⁴ Apart from the astrologers, the other fortune-tellers were the palmists or 'Samudrik'.⁴⁵ They read the lines of the palm and made predictions. Some of them also made predictions by reading the face of the enquirer.⁴⁶

38. Madhu Malti, p.102, v.438 & 439 etc.

39. Sur Sagar, I, p. 290, v. 704; Also Humayun Nama, pp.32 & 48.

40. Ibid.

41. Kabir Granthawali, p. 226, v.141; Also Jayasi Granthawali; pp.315-316, v.16.

42. Sur Sagar, p.290, v.704.

43. Padmavat, pp. 93-94, v. 96.

44. Mrigavati, p.12, v.16.

45. Padmavat, p.72, v.73.

The Bhats :

The Bhats were supposed to be a section of the Brahmins, who follow the bardic profession and, therefore, are an offshoot from them.⁴⁷ Hutton, assigned them a mixed Brahman and Rajput extraction - though, they, themselves, claimed Brahman descent.⁴⁸ Due to frequent warfare and the institution of chivalry, the number of bards swelled in the early medieval period.⁴⁹ And, a number of Brahmins who frequented the courts of princes and the camps of warriors joined this section.⁵⁰

That the Bhats existed as an important section of the society in the sixteenth century North India, is evident from their references in the writing of the contemporary poets.⁵¹ Tulsidas refers to them :

पदेहिं भाट गुन गावहिं गायक । सुवत नृपहिं बनु लागहिं सायक ।⁵²

47. Crooke, Tribes and castes, Vol.II,p.81.

48. Hutton, Caste In India, p. 277.

49. Yadav, p. 20.

50. Ibid; Also reference 1 & 2 above.

51. Rahiman Vilas, p.34, v. 65.

52. Manas, p.365, v. 36.3; Also, p. 290, v. 319.

Also, '84 Varshnavon', pp. 139-142; pp.305-307.

They were bards or court-singers and so, they depended on the court for their livelihood. Being patronized by the king, they naturally sang his praise :

मागध सुत बरी सुनगायक । - - - - - 53

They, thus, became an integral part of the court-life, rather, the political life of the Medieval period. They would hold the attention of enthralled audience by their recitals :

ताजिन्ह बदै भाट बहु बले, बचन सुभ सुख बोसत भे । 54

The Bhats are also referred to as 'Bandi'⁵⁵ or 'Bandijan'⁵⁶ and Charans⁵⁷ Tulsidas has referred to 'Magadh' and 'Soot' along-with the 'Bhats',⁵⁸ They were also part of the court-retinue and, it seems, they were the sub-sections of the Bards or Bhats in general.⁵⁹ Apart from singing praises for the kings-Patrons, they also recited their long genealogical tables :

तब बंदीजन जनक बोलाए । बिदिदावती कहत बलि जाए । 60

53. Manas, p. 273, v. 299.3; Also p. 328, v. 357.3.

54. Madhu Maiti, p.103, v. 444.

55. Manas, p.233, v. 249.

56. Ibid; v. 248.4; Also Sur Sagar, I, p.290, v.87/705,

57. Ibid; p.243, v. 262; Also, p.273, v. 299.3

58. Ibid.

59. Manas, p. 233, v. 248.4

60. Surdas : बिपु-सुजन-वरण-बंदीजन, सकल नन्द गृह जाए ।

(S.S.I, p.290, v.87/705).

They , in fact, became an integral part of the daily life and sang their bardic- songs, praises and hymns everyday- early in the morning :

बिलपत नृपहि भयउ भिनुसारा । बीना बेनु संख धुनि द्वारा ।।
पदहिं भाट गुन गावहिं गायक । सुनत नृपहि अनु लागहिं सायक ।।⁶¹

Apart from their importance as Court-singers, they stood as a class apart because, of their excellent presence of mind and intelligence :

बंदी मागध सुतगन बिखु बंदहिं मति धीर ।⁶²

On certain occasions, they were recipients of a special sum of money called "Neo'chhawar" :

नाउ बारी भाट नट राम निछावरि पाई ।⁶³

They were also on occasions, sent as special messengers or envoys by the medieval kings :

कह नृप पाइ कहहु पन मोरा । बले भाट हिये हरहु न धोरा ।⁶⁴

They, Thus, conveyed their king's message to the other rulers :
पन बिदेह कर कहहिं हम कुवा उठाइ बिसात ।⁶⁵

61. Manas, p.365, v.36.3; Also, p.328, v. 357.3..

62. Ibid; p. 243, v. 262.

63. Ibid; p.290, v. 319.

64. Ibid; p. 233, v. 248.4.

65. Ibid; p. 233, v. 249, Also, v. 249.1, 249.2.

They were considered to be courageous persons - most willing to sacrifice even their lives :

भौंटेहि कहाँ मींछु सों डरना । हाथ कटावरि पेट हनि मरना ।⁶⁶

Beings courageous, he always spoke the truth :

पहिते भरु भौंटे सत भासी । - - - - -⁶⁷

Moreover, being an envoy he had to speak the truth- however, bitter it be- for a correct presentation of facts and messages :

खरि बात कहें रिस लागै । खरि पै कहै बसीठ ।⁶⁸

Apart from being considered honest and brave - they were also expected to be extremely respectful in behaviour. Therefore, dis-courtesies were not expected from them :

जाति करा कत औगुन लाविस । बाढ़ें हाथ राज बरम्हावसि ।⁶⁹

That, the Bhats got such a prominent place was also due to the myth associated with their birth- that they were the part or shadow of God.⁷⁰ They were also important, because they were often used by the kings as shock-absorbers or shelters or 'Argala' :

भाट अहि ईश्वर के क्ला । राजा सम राखहि अगला ।⁷¹

66. Padmavat, p. 255, v. 268; Also, pp. 250-251, v. 263 & p.254, v.267.

67. Ibid; p.259,v.273.

68. Ibid ; p.255,v.268

69. Ibid; p.254, v.267,Also.p.252,v.265.

70. Padmavat, p.254, v. 267.

71. Ibid.

They would, also, prevent the king s from taking drastic or rash actions ⁷² and, at times, would give advice contrary to the king's desires ⁷³. Not only that, he would warn his lord patron not to leave the true path and not to be a possessor of false- ego or pride :

बोला भोट नरेस सुनु गरब न छापा जीव । ⁷⁴

That , he could do or say so was, infact, in large measure, due to an indemnity associated with their post, position or work. They could not be killed even as a form of punishment :

भाट नाऊ का मारो जीवो । अबहुं बोल नाइ के गीवो । ⁷⁵

72. Padmavat, p.254, v.267.

73. Ibid. pp.250-251, v.263.

74. Ibid; p. 252, v. 265.

75. Ibid; p. 254, v. 267.

Doctors or Vaidyas Etc.

The lists of eminent men in the Ain-i-Akbari⁷⁶ is an evidence that official rank was conferred on physicians also.⁷⁷ The common people in those times, generally, doctored themselves with the herbs, which they gathered, while, a large town had one or possibly, two men, with some practice in medicine.⁷⁸

The Doctors that are referred to, in the contemporary literature, are the doctors of Indian medicine or Vaidya.⁷⁹ They were, generally referred to when the patients' conditions got worse :

भर असाध जो रे उपचारा । तेहि रोगिआ रे बेद का करा ।⁸⁰

These were, in fact, wise men who had enough experience and knew a number of medicines.⁸¹ Tulsidas, while, enumerating the list of the occupational castes has also mentioned them :

- - - - - । बेद बेदी कवि मानस गुनी ॥⁸²

76. Ain, Blochman, pp. 611-613.

77. Moreland, 'India- death of Akbar' ; p.84.

78. Ibid; p.85.

79. Mrigavati, p.68,v.87.

80. Ibid; pp. 162-163, v. 196.

81. Ibid, p. 178, v. 213, Rahiman vilas, p.22,v.218 refers to 'Bhesa' or Medicines.

82. Manas; p. 652.v. 25.2.

However, in the medieval Indian Society, when somebody fell ill, it was supposed to be the handi-work of some evil spirits, Thus, there were experts to treat these ailments through incantations or 'Mantra' and cure the patient.⁸³ These men were known as 'Navats' and 'Ojhas' :

भए बिनु जित नावत औ ओझा - - - - - - - - 84

Apart from the 'Navats' and 'Ojhas', we also find the mention of 'Sayan' and 'Garuri,' who were also physicians- it seems :

जाँवत गुनी गारुरी आए । ओझा वेद सयान बोलाए ।

वरवहिं छेढटा परिलहिं नारी । निअर नाहिं ओझद तेहि बारी 85

Where the Vaidyas used the herbal medicines or 'Aushad'⁸⁶; the 'Garuri', on the other hand, used to cure even the snake-bites or insect-bites by their incantations :

पाहें घालि काल सो राखा मंत्र न गरुरि कोइ । 87

Kabirdas also mentions to their presence and popularity in treating snake-bites etc.⁸⁸

83. Padmavat; pp. 183-184, v. 192.

84. Ibid, Also, Dohawali, p. 32, v. 68.

85. Padmavat; p. 116, v. 120.

86. Ibid.

87. Padmavat; pp. 485-486, v. 469;

88. Kabir Granthawali, p. 195, v. 83.

The Kayasths :

The earliest written evidence of the popularity and prevalence of the term 'Kayasth' has been found in the Yagyavalkya Smriti⁸⁹ and the literary and epigraphic records of the Gupta period.⁹⁰ However, Sircar opines that their crystallisation into caste was due to the fusion of the class of scribes with the tribal group known as Karan⁹¹. This fusion, as a matter of fact, appears to have been a stage in the formation of the Kayasth caste and not the cause of it.⁹² The minor Smritis of VedVyas and Usanas, which belong to the early medieval period, mention Kayasth as a caste.⁹³ Thus, it is brought forth, how a professional class was being consolidated into a caste or occupational caste, so to say, in this period-obviously, owing to the hereditary nature of the profession,⁹⁴ alongwith the policy of patrimonial monarchies, which was favourable to it.⁹⁵

89. Yagyavalka, I, p.336.

90. D.C. Sircar, Bhartiya Vidya, Vol.X, 1949, p. 280.

91. Ibid.

92. Yadav, p.100, f.n. 557.

93. Kane, II, pt. I, p. 76.

94. Max Weber, 'The Religion of India', p. 110.

95. Yadav, p. 51.

The reference of Kayasth in the sixteenth century, North India, is to be found in Padmavat of Jayasi, wherein, he has described their women-folk. He mentions about the Kayasth women or 'Kaithini' :

- - - - - कैथिनि बली समाह न आँगा ।⁹⁶

That, the Kayasths had emerged basically as writers or accountants is evident from a verse of Kabirdas :

कबीर काइथि कागद काटिया, तब तेखे वार न पार ।⁹⁷

And, thus, he calls them 'Kayath'.⁹⁸

That, they had started working with the new Mughal Officials⁹⁹ is also evident from the literary accounts of that period. They were supposed to gain employment—generally as state servants,¹⁰⁰ gaining gradual promotions and reaching to the top of administration, that is, the post of Diwan.¹⁰¹

96. Padmavat, p.177, v. 185; Also, Rahiman Vilas, p.29, v.9.

97. Kabir Granthawali, p. 71, v.4.

98. Ibid; v. 3.

99. '84 Vaishnavon ki Varta' p.127, describes a kayasth, who lived & worked with the Hakim of Ujjain; Also, pp.302-305.

100. Ibid; Also '252 Vaishnavon Ki Varta'; pp. 108-136; pp.136-141 etc.

101. Ibid.

The Boat -men or 'Kevats' :

The Indian sub- continent has a number of rivers.¹⁰² These rivers are spread all over the country, rising either from the Himalayas, Siwalik and other hills.¹⁰³ Realizing their importance for transit and transport, Akbar had made strict laws to govern the transport of goods, through these rivers.¹⁰⁴ Thus, boats and ships are specially mentioned in the Ain.¹⁰⁵

The people, who plied boats to earn their livelihood were known as 'kevats' :

मागी नाव न केवट आना । - - - - - 106

Crossing the rivers posed great problems for travellers in Medieval period. The people, who were engaged in helping the people in crossing the rivers, have been referred to as, 'Kanhara'.¹⁰⁷ :

जों ते झर निबहि न पारा । सो का गरब करे कनहारा ।¹⁰⁸

102. Al- beruni (ab.) pp.122-124.

103. Babarnama, I, p.485.

104. Ain, pp. 291 - 292.

105. Ibid, pp.289-292.

106. Manas, p. 418, v. 99.2

107. Derived from 'Karn-adhar', Padmavat, p.295, f.n.5.

108. Padmavat, p.295, v. 389.

But, they have, generally, been mentioned as 'Kevats'- which seems to be a popular term then prevalent.¹⁰⁹ Surdas has used another term for the boat-men and, that is 'Mallah' - a term in vogue even today :

ऐसे बिनु मल्लाह सुंदरी, एक नाउ चढ़ई ।¹¹⁰

These boat-men have also been called, 'Nishads', a nomenclature suffixed as a surname in the modern times to denote their professional caste. Thus, it appears that their crystallisation as an occupational caste had begun in the sixteenth century itself :

भयउ निषादु विषादवस देखत सखि तुरी ।

बोलि सुखेवक वारि तब दिए सारथी संग ॥¹¹¹

There is, also, a reference to the boat-men being called 'Dheemar' in the Medieval Hindi literature.¹¹² Kabirdas has, also, mentioned the oars as the Kevat's implement, responsible for the plying of their boats.¹¹³

109. Kabir Granthawali, p.102, v.6; Sur Sagar, I, pp.101-102, v.308, Manas, p.418, v. 99.2; Also, KavitaVali, p.23, v.6; Mrigavati, p.130, v. 160; And, Kaharanama, p.82.

110. Sur Sagar, II, p.347, v. 3296.

111. Manas, p.457, v. 143; Also, p.456, v. 141.2 & v.142; And, KavitaVali, p.24, v.8.

112. Kaharanama, p.83.

113. Kabir Granthawali, p. 376, v.11.

This class does not seem to be very prosperous. They, somehow, managed to eke their living, through this profession :
हों दीन बित्तहीन, कैसे दूसरी गढ़ाइहों ।।¹¹⁴

They had been accepted as a separate professional caste by the sixteenth century and, thus, referred to as 'Jati'.¹¹⁵ That, they were placed, lower in rank in the Indian caste- system is evident from the fact that, they were not permitted the study of the 'Veds' :

केवटकी जाति, कुछ वेद न पढ़ाइहों ।¹¹⁶

That, they were paid for enabling the people to cross the ferries and rivers and, also, for transportation of goods etc. is evident from the use of the word 'Utrai' for payment made to them.¹¹⁷ Thus, the payments made to them, for the services, they rendered, formed the basis of the income of these 'Kevats'.

114. KavitaVali, p. 24, v.8 Also, p.23, v.6; Sur Sagar, I, p.199, v.484 & v.485.

115. KavitaVali, p.24, v. 8.

116. Ibid; Also, Manas, p.550, v. 249.3.

117. Manas, p. 419, v. 99.5; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.199, v.484; And, Kaharanama, p.82.

The 'Kevats', generally, lived as a group near the rivers¹¹⁸, (on which depended their living or livelihood) and, had a leader, who commanded them :

बोति सुखेवक चारि तब दिए सारथी संग ॥¹¹⁹

The 'Kahars' or Palquin - Carriers :

We find a regular reference to the Kahars as a professional group used for carrying the palquins, known as Dolis¹²⁰, Kanwars¹²¹ and 'Chodols or Chondols'¹²² Surdas also mentions about them in his Sur Sagar.¹²³

The palquins were the generally used mode of transportation from one place to another, especially for the ladies. They travelled to the bride-groom's house after their marriages in these palquins, which were well-covered and properly curtained.¹²⁴

118. Manas, p. 457, v. 143.

119. Ibid.

120. Kabir Granthawali, p.199, v.90,Also, Ain, p.264.

121. Manas, p. 274, v. 299.4.

122. Mrigavati, p. 334, v. 387; Also, Ain, p.264.

123. Sur Sagar,I, pp. 153-154, v. 411.

124. Kabir Granthawali, p.199, v. 90.

The 'Chandols' (or Chodols) were bigger palquins and required a large number of kahars :

हुअे घले चौकुल सुहावन सो सो लगे कहार । 125

Apart from carrying people, especially ladies, the kahars also transported heavy goods and commodities in medieval India :

- - - - - करि - करि भार कहारन्ह आने । 126

It, thus, appears that the Kahars, had by the sixteenth century, crystallised into a well-knit occupational group or caste. That large numbers of them existed in the society, is evident from the fact that, the palquins were the usual mode of conveyance and transportation in Medieval India.¹²⁷.

The Washerman or 'Dhobi' :

The Washermen are referred to as 'Dhobi' by the Hindi poets of the sixteenth century. Kabirdas¹²⁸ and Jayasi¹²⁹ have referred to the Dhobis in their respective works.

125. Mrigavati, p.334, v. 387.

126. Manas, p. 499, v. 192.2.

127. Ain, p.264; "At court, several thousand of them are kept---"

128. Kabir Granthawali, p.50,v.11; Also, Mrigavati, p.367, v.424.

129. Padmavat, pp.447-449, v. 437; Also, f.n. 9.

The Washerwoman, was known as 'Dhobin' :

बादें अकासी धोबिनि आई । - - - - - 130

The Dhobi used to wash the clothes, as he does now.¹³¹ He had to wash the clothes clean- to make it wearable for the people :

पैसे धोबिया रख मत धोवै । - - - - - 132

The Barbers Etc. or 'Nau' and 'Bari' :

The Barber was an important member of the society.¹³³ He was responsible for cutting the hair of the people.,¹³⁴ to trim them and keep them in shape. It was he who prevented them from looking shabby. Apart from this primary duty, he also played an important part in the lobing of the ears or

■ Kanchedan" :

- - - - - कनछेदन देखत जिय मुरकी ।

रोवत देखि जननि अकुलानी, दियो तुरत नोजा को धुरकी ।¹³⁵

130. Padmavat, pp. 130-131, v. 135.

131. The tradition of Washermen or Washer-women washing clothes and returning them to the people at their homes is still prevalent in India, despite the laundries & Dry-cleaners.

132. Kabir Granthawali; p.350,v.17. Also, p.376,v.11.

133. Ardhakatha, p. 3.

134. Kabir Granthawali; p.375, v.11.

135. Sur Sagar, I, p.321, v. 798.

Since, almost all children, irrespective of their sex, got their ears lobed- the barbers must have had the burden of this work round the year. Moreover, it was a job requiring skill and the technique of a surgeon. Thus, it is evident that, they were a skilled group.

Apart from the barbers but aligned to them - in almost a symbiotic relationship, existed the 'Baris' ;

नाउ बारी भाट नट राम निछावरि पाह ।¹³⁶

Thus, we see that apart from the barber, they, too, received the customary amount of money on certain special occasions. This was known as the 'Neochawar'.

That , they served the people, specially the richer section of the society alongwith the barber is evident from Mrigavati also.¹³⁷

136. Manas, p.290, v. 319.

137. Mrigavati, p.367, v. 424.

The Potter or Kumhar :

This professional class of the potters or 'Kumhars' are referred to, by almost all the Hindi poets of the sixteenth century. Kabir refers to the potter as 'Kumbhar' :

कबीर माटी मसणि कुंभार की, घणी सहसिरि तात ।¹³⁸

Rahim calls him Kumhar¹³⁹ Jayasi has referred to them as 'Kumhar',¹⁴⁰ or 'Kohar',¹⁴¹ Kabirdas has referred to him as 'Kulal'¹⁴² also.

It was the Kumhar's profession to build a number of vessels or utensils of earthenware :

कुहरा ह्ये करि बासन घरिहुँ, - - - - -¹⁴³

These vessels were of different shapes and sizes- the variety was manifested.¹⁴⁴ The lump of soil or earth used was the same but, they were moulded into different vessels and utensils :

एक चाक सब पिँडा बदे । भाँति भाँति के मोँहा गदे ।।¹⁴⁵

138. Kabir Granthawali, p.42, v. 29.

139. Rahiman Vilas, p.19,v.188 & p.31,v.29.

140. Padmavat, p.149, v. 155 & p.400,v.394.

141. Padmavat, pp.368-369,v.367.

142. Kabir Granthawali, p.307,v.7.

143. Ibid; p.376, v. 11.

144. Refer to above.

145. 'Akhravat', Jayasi Granthawali, p.306, v. 5.

Thus, the potter's craft and technique was highly developed as is evident from his productions from soil or earth.¹⁴⁶

He produced a variety of goods simply by the movements of his hands co-ordinated with the movement of the 'Chak' or the potters' wheel :

फिरत सहुँद जोवन लख ताका । जैसे फिरे कुम्हार का चाका ।¹⁴⁷

Jayasi also calls it the 'Chak'.¹⁴⁸ Whereas, Kabir has referred to the potters' wheel as 'Chaki'.¹⁴⁹

Jayasi has referred to very important & interesting aspect of the potters' wheel. He says :

हुरी औ नाव दाहिन रथ हाँका । बाए फिरे कौहार का चाका¹⁵⁰

that, horse, boat and chariot are run by a man's right hand and so, go clockwise. Whereas, the potters' wheel moves to the left or rotates in an anti-clockwise manner.¹⁵¹ That, this wheel moved with the help of a stick attached to a hole in the wheel :
रहिमन चाक कुम्हार को, माँगे दिया न देख ।

छेद में डला डारि के , चहे नाँद से लेइ ॥¹⁵²

146. Kabir Granthawali, pp.177-178, v.53.

147. Padmavat, p.149, v.155.

148. Akhravat, Jayasi Granthawali, p.306, v.5; Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.26-27, v.2483.

149. Kabir Granthawali, p.31, v.1.

150. Padmavat, pp.368-369, v.367.

151. Ibid.

152. Rahiman Vilas, p.19, v.188.

The produced articles and vessels etc. were called unbaked or 'Kachcha' or 'kacha'.¹⁵³ And, therefore, in order to be fit for use, it was baked in a kiln and, then it became 'pucca' or 'Paka' :

पाका कलस हुमार का , बहुरि न बदेई चाकि ।¹⁵⁴

The fire-place or a kiln, wherein, the produced but raw goods were baked and, finally, prepared was known as 'Aanwa',¹⁵⁵ or even 'Pawan' :

अगिनि माँगे देइ न कोई । पाहन पवन पानि सुनि होई ।¹⁵⁶

The Weavers :

Most of the cloth that was produced in Medieval India was from home-spun cotton.¹⁵⁷ Thus, it seems that, the weavers must have been in great numbers and, also spread all over the country to meet the large demand. Of the eight guilds of the artisans called 'Antyajā', Alberuni refers also to the weavers.¹⁵⁸

153. Kabir Granthawali, p.44, v. 38 & 39.

154. Ibid; p.31, v. 1.

155. Padmavat, p.408, f.n.6.

156. Padmavat, pp. 407-408, v.402.

157. Pelsaert, pp.4-19; Also Travemier Vol.II, p.2-8. Terry, p.22.

158. Alberuni (ab.), p.47.

But, they were considered very low in the social ratings
alongwith the fuller and the shoe-maker- 'for no others would
condescend to have anything to do with them'.¹⁵⁹

The weavers were known as 'Julaha',¹⁶⁰ Kabir was himself
a cotton - carder of Kashi.

तू बाह्मण में कासी का जुलाहा, - - - - - ।

- - - - - ।

- - - - - ।

रामदेव की सेवा धूका, पकरि जुलाहा कीहा ॥¹⁶¹

Jayasi has also referred to them in his poetry.¹⁶²

159. Alberuni (ab.), p. 47.

160. Yasin, M., p. 30, f.n. 13.

161. Kabir Granthawali, p. 294, v. 44.

162. Maslanama, p. 107, v. 49.

Carpenters or 'Badhai' :

The perusal of the poetry of the sixteenth century North India, makes it evident that the 'Carpenters' had established themselves as a separate professional class.

Tulsidas refers to the carpenter in his Manas :

मातु कुमत बढई अघ मूला । तेहिं हमार हित कीह बँसुला ।¹⁶³

Tulsidas has used the term 'Badhai'. Whereas, Surdas used the term prevalent in the local dialect and called him 'Badhaiya':

पालनी अति सुंदर गदि ल्याउ रे बढैया ।¹⁶⁴

He was also called Vishwakarma,¹⁶⁵ a term which is used upto this day by this class as their surname. The nomenclature 'Vishwakarma',¹⁶⁶ as a matter of fact, denotes their professional caste. And, thus it appears that, they had, more or less, stabilised as a separate caste group, in the period of our study.

163. Manas, p. 576. v. 211.2; Also Kabir Granthawali, p.178, v.55 & p. 376, v. 11.

164. Sur Sagar, I, p. 275, v. 659.

165. Ibid; pp. 274- 275, v. 658; Also, p.289, v. 702.

166. Madhu Malti, p.89, v. 89.

The Carpenters were always associated with the building activities, employed for window, door- fittings etc.¹⁶⁷ He used to construct wooden cradles for the children.¹⁶⁸ He also made 'Dolna' or 'Palquin' - used for carrying the brides to the grooms' house after their marriages :

ते आयो गदिं डोलना हो ॥ विसकर्मा सुतहार ।¹⁶⁹

That, the Carpenters also made wooden saddles, which were used on horses, is evident from the description of Qutbun :

उवह अगस्त घटह जग पानी तुरियहि देउ पलान ।¹⁷⁰

'Palan' definitely means saddle. Thus, that saddles were used is beyond doubt- though, it has been opined that, in the medieval times, the saddles were mainly made of cloth.¹⁷¹ But, that the wooden saddles were made and often used also, cannot be denied.¹⁷²

167. Mrigavati, p. 28, v. 35.

168. Sur Sagar, I, p.275, v. 659.

169. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 658; Also, p.289,v.702.

170. Mrigavati, pp. 300-301, v. 348.

171. Ain, pp. 143-144; Also, Moreland, India At The Death of Akbar!, p.163.

172. Refer to 4 and 5 above.

Blacksmith or Ironsmith or Lohar :

We find a number of references of the Lohars in the Medieval Hindi Literature. That, he was the man, who dealt with iron, and, produced iron goods :

- - - - - लोहे लोहि लुहार ।

कसणी दे कंधन कीया, ताइ लीया ततवार ।¹⁷³

That, the art of producing iron-goods had been perfected - is also obvious from the above verse. The Lohars had become skilled workers by the advent of the Medieval period. Rahim also refers to this class, as the makers of articles like sword :

लोहे की न लोहार की , रहि मन कहि बिचार ।

जो हनि मारे सीस में , ताही की ततवार ।¹⁷⁴

The 'Lohar' or 'Luhar' was also needed in the construction of houses, temples,¹⁷⁵ apart from making utensils & weapons etc.

173. Kabir Granthawali, p. 5, v. 28.

174. Rahiman Vilas, p. 25, v. 253.

175. Mrigavati, p. 28, v. 35.

Kabir, in fact, refers to the process involved in the creation or construction of the various articles. He describes how the big iron piece was brought into different shapes and forms by keeping it on a support or 'Aharan' and, then, striking it with a big iron hammer or Ghan :

घण अहरणि बिचि लोह जूँ , घणी सहे सिर घोट ।¹⁷⁶

Its an old proverb " Strike the Iron while its hot". Thus, we find that a fire becomes an essential and inevitable part of the blacksmith's trade- it kept the iron hot- which was then struck according to the shape in which, it was to be moulded :

कबीर धवणि धवती रहि गई , बुझि गए अंगार ।
अहरणि रह्या ठमकड़ा , जब उठि चले सुहार ।¹⁷⁷

The Goldsmiths :

In the literature of the sixteenth century, we find regular reference to the Goldsmiths or 'Sunar' as they were called :

कनक कसोटि जैसे कसि लेइ सुनारो । - - - - -¹⁷⁸

176. Kabir Granthawali, p.46, v.51, Also, Rahiman Vilas, p.31, v.30

177. Ibid, p.123, v. 21; Also Rahiman Vilas, p.31, v.29.

178. Kabir Granthawali, pp.154-155, v.17; Also, Mrigavati, p.28, v.35.

The art of the goldsmith had reached perfection.

That he was skilled in his profession is evident :

उनगढ़ सोना टोलना, ल्याए चतुर सुनार ।

बीच बीच हीरा लगे, लाल गले का हार ।¹⁷⁹

The goldsmiths, due to their continuous work with the technique had acquired perfection not only in the cutting and shaping of Gold but, also in its joining.¹⁸⁰ If, some-how, a piece of Gold was broken it would be mended-the pieces joined in such a way that, it once more appeared to be just one piece :

परा प्रीति कंचन में ही सीसा । किन्नरि न मिले स्याम पे दीसा ।

कहाँ सोनार पास जेहि जाऊँ । देह सोहाग करे एक ठाऊँ ।¹⁸¹

It can further be inferred from the aforementioned verse that lead or 'Sisa' caused the Golden piece to break and 'Suhaga' - a chemical mixture was used for its joining.¹⁸²

The process of the purification and cleaning of Gold was also known in the India of the sixteenth century.¹⁸³

179. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 658 & 659.

180. Padmavat, p. 87, v. 89.

181. Ibid.

182. Padmavat, p.87, v. 89.

183. Padmavat, f.n. 9, p. 391.

When a customer gave Gold for the purposes of cleaning or purification, a small piece was cut -cleaned immediately and given to the customer to keep as a sample. The customer was, finally, handed over the major portion of the piece (almost the whole) after cleaning. He would then tally this piece with the sample given earlier to check the purity level.¹⁸⁴

Similarly, we have evidence of the process of gold-washing :

कनक जो कन कन होइ बिहराई । पिय पैछार समेटे आई ।
बिरह पवन यह छार सरीर । छोटहु आनि मिला बहु नीर ।¹⁸⁵

The gold-washers were, as a matter of fact, known as 'Niaria'¹⁸⁶ and, they were able to resuscitate the gold from the ash or dust.¹⁸⁷

The merchants who dealt in the Gold were known as *samafs*¹⁸⁸ and, they were clever enough to assess the purity

184. Padmavat, f.n. 9, p. 391.

185. Padmavat; pp. 633-634, v. 582.

186. Padmavat, f.n. 7, p. 634.

187. Ain, p. 24.

188. Manas, p. 947, v. 27.5; Also, Padmavat, p.37,v.37,& Ain, p.24.

of a gold piece, but, 'barwari' was especially appointed for it¹⁸⁹

हंसत सुआ पहें आइ सो नारी । दीन्ह कसोटि औ बनवारी ।¹⁹⁰

Thus, it is evident that, the 'Barwari' tested the purity of gold.

It seems. that this professional group, had, by the sixteenth century, gained a separate caste status. That is why, we find Jayasi mentioning their lady in the list of the ladies of other castes and sub-castes; who accompanied a princess :

चली सोनारी सोहाग सोहाती । - - - - - ।¹⁹¹

There was a growing demand for golden and other precious things, due to the stability and splendour of the Mughal rule in India. This is evident by the over-specialization in the profession of the gold-smiths. We soon find a new sub-group, which had the skills of inlay-work, that is, fixing the

189. Ain, p. 19.

190. Padmavat, p.81, v. 83.

191. Padmavat, p. 177, v. 185, Also, Rahiman Vilas, p.30,v.15.

the precious- stones etc. in the finger-ring. This sub-group was known as 'Jaraiyya':.

बहु विधि करि करि जराउ , तयाउ रे जरेया । ¹⁹²

But, to make this fixation possible, the precious metal of the ring, whether gold or silver, had to be hammered so that the stone was fixed properly and beautifully. The professionals skilled in this technique, were known as 'kundigarin'.¹⁹³

The 'Jewellers' or 'Jauharis',¹⁹⁴ had already started catering to the needs of jewelery in the sixteenth century, North India.

The Gwals or Milkmen or Ahir :

The term 'Gwals and Gwalins' ¹⁹⁵ have been referred to repeatedly by the poets of Medieval India, to a professional class of milk-men and women. Surdas especially refers to them in Sur Sagar :

ढोलत खात मनौ रन जीते । भर सबनि के मन के जीते । ¹⁹⁶

192. Sur Sagar, I, p.275, v.659.

193. Rahiman vilas, p.36, v. 94.

194. Rahiman vilas, p.29, v. 7.

195. Sur Sagar, I, p.56, v. 172; Also, p.78, v.242; p.305 v.750, p.288, v. 697, Also, Padmavat, pp. 130-131, v. 135.

It was somewhere in the medieval period itself that this professional class, too crystallized into an occupational caste, known by the name of Abhira.¹⁹⁷ Later on, they came to be known as 'Ahirs' as in Manas;

तेइ सुन हरित चरे जक गाई । भाव बच्छ सिसु पाइ पेन्हाई ॥

नोई निबृत्ति पात्र बिस्वासा । निर्मल मन अहीर निब दासा ॥¹⁹⁸

They were, the same section of people, who were engaged as milkmen and cowherd. Moreover, Surdas, has removed whatever doubts may have existed in the medieval times, regarding the change in the nomenclature. He has used both the terms in a verse to clarify the whole picture :

संकट साधि सब ग्वाल चले मिलि गिरि पूजा के काज ।

अति आनंद भरे मिलि गावत , उमड़े फिरत अहीर ।¹⁹⁹

That, they had established as a separate occupational caste

is also evident from the fact of the usage of the term 'Jati' alongwith the word 'Ahir' :

अहिर जाति कोऊ न पत्याई -----²⁰⁰

196. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 270-271, v. 650.

197. Yadav, Society & Culture, p. 47, Vrahadharm Puran, III, p. 13.

Also, Majumdar, R.C., History of Bengal, Vol. II, p. 567 & Hazra, Studies in Up Purans, II, p. 437.

198. Manas; pp. 1039-1040, v. 6; Also Sur Sagar, I, p. 517, v. 1358 et

199. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 547-548, v. 828/1446; Also, p. 550, v. 836/1454.

200. Ibid; pp. 578-579, v. 1541, Also, p. 573, v. 1525, p. 571, v. 1518 etc.

It seems that they were considered to be men of country-side or villages with lesser intelligence :

हम सब अहिर जाति मति हीनी - - - - - ²⁰¹

It is further corroborated by another verse :

अहिर जाति ओछी मति की-ही अपनी जाति पुँकट कटि दी-ही। ²⁰²

That, they were considered to be of lower caste is also evident as the people of the upper castes never met them or intermingled with them freely. ²⁰³

Being a close occupational caste, they were closely-knit. They had a head-man or leader, who was known as the 'Gop-Rai'. ²⁰⁴ The community was known as the 'Jado kul' or Yadav kul. ²⁰⁵ And, thus the Gop Rai mentioned above ²⁰⁶, automatically, became Jado - Rai :

आजु हो बधायो बाजे नंद गोप - राइ के ²⁰⁷
जदकुल - जादो राइ जवमें हैं आइ के ।

201. *Sur Sagar*, p.568, v. 1507; Also, p.571, v. 1518.

202. Ibid; p.573, v. 1525.

203. Ibid; p.79, v. 244.

204. 'Rai' was a title used by Hindu Chief and chieftains in the Medieval India : Irfan Habib, *Mughal Agrarian System*, p.183.

205. *Sur Sagar*, I, p.270, v.649; Also pp.271-277, v.652.

206. Refer above. (204)

207. *Sur Sagar*, I, p.270, v.649; Also, pp. 256-259, v.622 & v.624.

The leader or the head-man of this caste has also been referred to as 'Yadav- Pati'.²⁰⁸ Thus, it is evident from the above descriptions, that they had started using the term Yadav²⁰⁹, which is the surname generally used by this caste even today.

That they acted primarily as cow-herds is evident from the following verse of Tulsidas :

तेह तुन हरित घेर जब गाई । भाव बच्छ सिसु पाइ पेन्हाई ॥²¹⁰

It is also corroborated by Surdas :

----- छेनु चरावन जात ।²¹¹

They, thus, attended to the grazing cows.²¹² And, it was during this duty that, they were generally assigned outside the village cultivated area- that, they used to have their lunch.²¹³ The lunch always, included 'Chhachh'.²¹⁴ and, this

208. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 87-88, v. 273.

209. Ibid, p. 92, v. 286.

210. Manas; pp. 1039-1040, v. 6.

211. Sur Sagar, I, p. 359, v. 912; Also, p. 403, v. 1042 & 1044.

212. Ibid; p. 417, v. 1072 & 1073; Also, p. 434, v. 1118.

213. Ibid ; p. 419, v. 1080 & 1082; Also, pp. 420-421, v. 1086, 1087 & 1089.

214. Ibid.

lunch was, generally brought to them by the women- folk of their houses and community.²¹⁵ And, it was during this duty that, they played their games like 'Gend Tari',²¹⁶ 'Chak-Dori',²¹⁷ and 'Aankh-Michai',²¹⁸ etc. :

हरि खालनि मिलि खेन लागे बन में ओखि मिचाई ।²¹⁹

Since, they reared cattles especially cows, they would sell the milk and milk-products in the nearby towns and cities :

मधुरा जाति हों बेचन दहियो ।²²⁰

Thus, it is clear that they would sell their products in the cities, where they, naturally got higher prices for them.

From milk, generally, curd was obtained²²¹ and, then this was stirred or churned to produce butter.²²² And, a special

215. Sur Sagar, I, p.422, v. 1093.

216. Ibid; p.444, v. 1151, 1152 & 1153 & p.445, v. 1154.

217. Ibid; p.496, v. 1288 & 1289.

218. Ibid; p.745, v. 2015.

219. Ibid.

220. Sur Sagar, I, p.365, v.931; Also, Padmavat pp.130-131, v.135.

221. Ibid; p.352, v. 880.

222. Ibid; p.361, v. 917 & 918; Also, p.397, v. 1021.

wooden tool, known as 'Mathani',²²³ was used to churn the curd. Another tool used by them for the milching of cows- to facilitate the milching was called 'Dohini'.²²⁴

As far as the milching of the cows was concerned , the boys of this caste were taught this art alongwith their grazing duty, at a very early age,²²⁵ generally, when they were as young as just eight years of age.

आठ बरस के हुँवर कन्हैया , - - - - - ।
माता से दोहनि कर दीन्ही , तब हरी हँसत दुहन को पायो ।²²⁶

The Liquor- Brewers & Sellers :

The liquor- brewers existed as a sepearte professional class in Medieval India and, they were known as Kalwar.²²⁷ They are also referred to as 'Kalal' :

कबीर पीवण हुतभ है , माँगे सीस कलात ॥²²⁸

223. Sur Sagar, I, pp.349-350, v. 883; Also, p.356, v.903.

224. Ibid, p.495, v. 1284 & 1285.

225. Ibid; p.396,v.1018.

226. Ibid; p.495,v.1285.

227. Padmavat, p.177, v.185; Also Rahiman Vilas,^T p.31,v.31.

228. Kabir Granthawali; p. 32, v. 2.

It seems that while they themselves were busy in the brewing and distillation of liquor, they left the task of selling it on their womenfolk. Whenever, we find a reference of a liquor shop, we inevitably, have a reference of 'Kalali'²²⁹ or 'Kalwari'²³⁰ :

धनि भाठी, धनि मद, धनि सरवा, धनि दुकान, कलवारी रे ।²³¹

Kabirdas, pointed out to the dangerous effects of the liquor on the health of man. Thus, he says that the price paid for the drink was too much :

कबीर भाठी कलाल की , बहुतक बेठे जाइ ।
सिर सोंपे सोई पीवै , नहीं तो पीया न जाइ ।²³²

We, find repeated references to the big ovens or 'Bhatti' or 'Bhati',²³³ in which the liquor was brewed. Kabirdas describes how the drink was made from brewing some grains or 'Lahan'. 'Gur' or jaggery was also added in the process and then, finally, something bitter was added to give it a bitter flavour :

काया कलाली लाहनि करि हूँ, गुठ सबद गुहूँ कीहा ।²³⁴
- - - - - काटि काटि कस दीन्हा ॥

229. Kabir Granthawali p.234, v.3.

230. Refer²²⁷ above; Also Rahiman Vilas, p.125.

231. Kaharanama, p.87; Also f.n. 8.

232. Kabir Granthawali, p.32, v. 3.

233. Kabir Granthawali, p.32, v.3; Also, Kaharanama, p.87.

234. Kabir Granthawali; p.234, v.3.

He further describes how the material prepared was boiled, its vapours cooled and reconverted into the liquid state.²³⁵

The Bird - Hunters :

The bird- hunters were generally accepted as 'Antyaja'.²³ In the Medieval period, they were known as 'Byadh' :

ज्यो व्याध फंद ते छूटत संग उड़ि चलत, तहाँ फिरि तकत नही त्रास माने ।²³⁷

Jayasi refers to him as 'Biyadh' in his Padmavat.²³⁸ Qutbun, however, calls him 'Parudhi'.²³⁹

Surdas refers to the bird-hunters 'phand', that is, they used some sort of string etc., in whose knot they got caught.²⁴⁰ They also used a bamboo or wooden pole for hunting is also evident :

पाँच बान कर खोंचा लासा भरे सो पाँच ।

पाँच भरे तनु अल्ला कत मारे बिनु बाँच ॥²⁴¹

235. Kabir Granthawali, p.234, v.3.

. Any student of chemistry can understand this process of distillation as described by Kabirdas.

236. Al-beruni (a.b.) p.47.

237. Sur Sagar, II, p.101, v.2867; Also, p.107, v.2898 & 2900.

238. Padmavat, pp.68-69, v. 69.

239. Mrigavati, pp.349-350, v.405; Also, p.352, v. 408.

240. Sur Sagar, II, p.101, v. 2867.

Thus, it seems that at the top of the stick were attached five arrow-heads, with sticking gum (Lhasa) spread over them. The parrot's or bird's wings got entangled in this gum. This pole with implements was called 'Tati'.²⁴²

The bird-hunters also employed nets to trap the birds, as is evident from Jayasi's description :

एहि छूठि माया मन भूला । दूरे पाँछ जेस तन फूला ।
यहु मन कठिन मरे नही मारा । जार न देखु देखु पै घारा ।²⁴³

The net was generally laid on the ground well spread out and some grain -pellets etc. were also spread below them

, which attracted the birds- which were then trapped.²⁴⁴
And, as soon as they were caught, their wings were torn apart and they were kept in a covered basket called 'Deli'.²⁴⁵

241. Padmavat, pp. 68-69, v. 69.

242. Ibid.

243. Padmavat, pp. 69-70, v. 70.

244. Ibid.

245. Ibid.

CHAPTER III

The Social classes (Continued)

The koris or Rope- Makers :

The koris¹ are often referred to by the Hindi literatuers of Medieval India. They generally made ropes from the jute and Kabir discusses the whole process :

खाइ बुण कोली में बेठी , म्हे खूटा में गादी ।

ताणें बाणें पड़ी अनंवासी , सूत म्हे बुणि गादी ॥²

Thus, it is evident that he either sat in a pit, or at a lower plane and pulled the jute lengthwise with the help of his feet and intertwined it, then, to make a strong rope.³ He hammered a wooden piece or 'khunta' in the ground and, then, spreading the jute lengthwise and intertwined them.

Their women-folk-known as 'korins'⁵ also worked industriously and skilfully. And, that is why, being placed

1. Kabir Granthawali, p. 148, v. 10 Also, Padmavat, p.177, v.185.

2. Kabir Granthawali, p.148, v. 10.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Rahiman vilas, p.36, v.98 and v.99.

lower in the social order,⁶ they were still able to live in a much better way is apparent :

भे कोरी संग पहिरि पटोरा । - - - - -⁷

They wore silken clothes and were quite well off. This may have been the reason for their social climb—that, they were also mentioned as companion of a Princess or lady.⁸

Oilman or Teli :

That , they had crystallised as an important class in Medieval India is well-established. They were known as 'Teli',⁹ as their profession related to oil—either manufacturing or selling or even both. They used to manufacture oil mainly from the seeds, which were crushed by an ox rotating round a place till oil came out and was stored :

तेलि तेल जस बाढ़े फिरे । परा ओर मँह सोह न तिरै ।¹⁰

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6. Rahiman vilas , p.36, v.98 & 99.
7. Padmavat, p.177, v. 185.
8. Ibid.
9. Ardhkatha, p.3.
10. Padmavat, pp.368-369, v.367.

The oil producing unit was then known as 'Kolhu', where the seeds were crushed and oil squeezed out :

तेली हवे तन कोल्हू करहो, पाप पुनि दोर पीरो ।¹¹

It is also evident that the edible oil was generally produced from the mustard seeds.¹²

The Shoemakers or 'Chamars' :

The Shoemakers as one of the eight professional guilds were mentioned by Al-Beruni.¹³ And, according to him, a very few others in the contemporary Hindu Society condescended to have anything to do with them.¹⁴

On the basis of the Indian accounts of the foreign travellers of Medieval period, Moreland opines that, the shoes were less commonly worn.¹⁵ But, since, we do get ample reference of shoes or 'Chappals' being worn by the people,¹⁶

11. Kabir Granthawali, p.376, v.II.

12. Rahiman vilas, p.32, v.41.

13. Al-beruni, (ab.) p.42.

14. Ibid.

15. Moreland, India ---Akbar pp.162-163.

16. Kabir Granthawali, p.376, v.11, Also Rahiman vilas, p.20, v.195.

we may conclude that this craft was, in fact, practised- but not on a very large scale. The shoes worn by kings, princes, aristocrats, officers must have been definitely different from those worn by the general populace. And, the demand of the general public must have been met by the local shoe-makers or Chamars.¹⁷

Thus, Kabir has definitely, referred to the Chamar trying to colour the 'chappals' or 'Adhuri' to make it wearable by the people. The women-folk or the 'Chamarins' also helped and co-operated with their men-folk and they also made and coloured the shoes and chappals.¹⁹

17. Ardhkatha, p.3.

18. Kabir Granthawali, p.376,v.11.

19. Rahiman vilas , 39, v. 139.

The Betel-Sellers or 'Tamboli :

The betels were eaten by the masses in India, from times unknown. It has been referred to, by Al-Beruni in details: 'For their country is **hot** , the inner parts of the bodies are cold, the natural warmth becomes feeble in them, and the power of digestion is so weak that they must strengthen it by eating the leaves of betel after dinner, and by chewing the betel- **nut**.'²⁰

Thus having realised its utility in totality, as well as, of its different constituents,²¹ Indians took to eating it regularly.²² Those who were associated with the profession of preparing the betel and selling it, are referred to, as 'Tamboli' in the Medieval Hindi literature.²³ They mixed different constituents to the betel-leaf, and, then on chewing, it gave the typical betel colour :

कहू जाइक कहू बने तंबोल रंग - - - - -²⁴

The betel -leaf, at times also turned yellow from the original green. Thus, both the fresh colour, as well, as

20. Al-beruni (ab.), p.237.

21. Ibid.

22. It is a habit of most of the people in North India.

23. Sur Sagar, II, p.154, v. 3137; Also, Kabir Granthawali, p.86, v.9 & Ardhkatha, p.3.

24. Ibid.

the ageing or stale colour of the betel-leaf are mentioned:

तंबोली के पान ज्यों, दिन दिन पीला होइ । ²⁵

The betel when prepared for consumption was known as 'Gilora'.²⁶ The betel-leaf was first cut, and then the constituents added to it and, after being folded, it assumed the 'Gilora' shape :

स्यंघ बैठा पान कतरे, छू गिलोरा लावे । ²⁷

They had, by the sixteenth century, perfected the art of betel-preparing and then serving it to the people. The kings, chieftains and the rich people, in whose house-hold, the consumption of betel was much, employed a 'Tamboli' for the job. He served betel to the visitors etc. :

जरे "खवाइत" पान सियावत । - - - - - ²⁸

25. Kabir Granthawali, p.86, v. 9

26. A nomenclature in vogue even today.

27. Kabir Granthawali, p.150, v. 12

28. Mrigavati, p.367, v. 424.

The Occupational Sub-Castes Associated with the Cloth-Industry:

In the Medieval literature we have references of the Calico-printers. Those persons who printed the cloth were known as 'cheeps' and their women- folk were known as 'Chheepin'.²⁹

The people involved in the dyeing of the cloth are also referred to, as 'Rangrej'.³⁰

And those who did the finesse were known as 'Kundins'.³¹ Apart from these, we have an additional group related to the cloth industry. This group was skilled in the art of weaving and preparing only good quality silken cloth. They were known as 'Patiyan'.³² They were accepted as a sub-caste called Patwa,³³ as they dealt with the silken cloth.

29. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 51.

30. Ibid, p. 30, v. 19.

31. Ibid, p. 35, v. 88.

32. Ibid, p. 32, v. 43.

33. Ibid, p.119, f.n. 43.

('CHEJARA' OR MASON):

(A New Professional Class Associated with The Building Industry:)

The masons adept in the art of cementing the bricks of a building were called 'Chejara'³⁴ by Kabir. They have also been referred as chunihar³⁵, but when they worked on stones³⁶ they were called 'Pathera'³⁷

The architect was referred to as 'Thavai'³⁸. There is a reference of the artisans called 'Soutrik',³⁹ who were skilled in the building - art too and their specialization was the base or foundation of a building.⁴⁰ Others, who were experts in the architectural embellishments have been referred to, as 'Negi' or 'Bhratya',⁴¹

There were fresco- painters who got associated with the building-art-to add to its splendour. They were called the 'Chitrakar',⁴² Carvings were also done for the embellishment

34. Kabir Granthawali, p. 41, verses 17 & 18.

35. Mrigavati, p. 28, v.35.

36. Refer to Babars' mentioning of the Stone-building of Gwalior, Babarnama, p. 608.

37. Mrigavati, p.28,v.35; maybe because of their association with 'Pathhar' or stone.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Mrigavati, p.27, v.34; Also, pp.68-69, v.87.

42. Ibid, p.27, v. 34.

by the 'Kundigars'.⁴³ The sawyers or 'karvatiya',⁴⁴ adept in the use of saw were also associated with the architecture in the medieval period, alongwith the Goldsmith or 'Sunar',⁴⁵ Carpenter or 'Badhai',⁴⁶ in the building of some specific portions or for certain specific works like the making of doors, windows and for other embellishments.

Shepherd or 'Gaderiya' :

That, the Shepherds or 'Gaderiyas' existed as a separate class has been established, by the references to them in the Hindi literature of the sixteenth century :

आगे आइ जो "देखिसि" काहा । एक गढ़ेरिया "अहे " चरवाहा ।⁴⁷

It seems evident, that they were responsible for the cattle-grazing and were also called 'Charvaha'. That, the shepherds or 'Gaderiyas' had formed a distinct professional class is certain. Apart from the sheep grazing, we find a reference that they cared for the goats or 'Chheri' also :

वह " रे " गढ़ेरिया "होत हेरीचर" आंधर किय केहुं आहि " ।⁴⁸

43. Mrigavati, p.27, v.34; Also, p.49, v.63.

44. Mrigavati, p.28, v.35.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Mrigavati, p.137, v.167.

48. Ibid, p.154, v. 186, Also, p.199, v.235.

Torchlight Bearers or Mashiyar :

The torch-light bearers were known as 'Mashiyar' or 'Mashalchi' in the Medieval times. As there were no lights on the street, the richer section of the people were always accompanied by a 'Mashalchi' or torch-bearer :

धरती संग चहुँ दिसि पूरि रहे मसियार ।⁴⁹

The Divers or 'Gotakhors' :

With the rivers being in abundance in India⁵⁰ and the land being surrounded by sea on the three sides, the importance of 'divers' can not be undermined. They had acquired the status of a professional group by the sixteenth century.

They were known as 'Marjiyas' :

कटु है पिउ कर खोज , ओ पावा सो मरजिया ।⁵¹

There were divers who would go deep into the seas, in search of the natural pearls has also been referred to :

जहँ अस बरे सगुँद नग दिया । तँह किमि जीव अछे मरजिया ।⁵²

49. Padmavat, p. 264, v. 278, Also, p.264, f.n. 4.

50. Al-beruni (ab.), pp.122-124; Also, Babarnama, I, p.485.

51. Akhravat, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.319-320, v.23, Also, p.328, v.37.

52. Padmavat, p.417, v. 412.

Butcher or 'Badhik' or 'Khatik' :

Kabirdas has referred to the people engaged in this job as a separate professional group. He has called them 'Khatik',⁵³ who slaughtered the animals and sold their flesh. However, he has also referred to them as 'Badhik' or killer.⁵⁴

Rahim has used another word for them and, that is 'Kasai',⁵⁵ their women- folk have been referred to as 'Kasain'.⁵⁶

53. Kabir Granthawali, p.124, v. 27.

54. Ibid, p.376, v. 11.

55. Rahimen Vilas, p.31, v. 37.

56. Ibid.

Some Other Professional Groups :

To cater to the growing sophisticated and refined requirements of the richer section of the Indian Society, there arose a few other classes. One such group catered to their needs of perfumes and scents. They were known as 'Gandhee'⁵⁷

Another group was that of Jewellers. They provided precious stones, gems and jewellery for the ladies. They were known as 'Jauhari'.⁵⁸

Water was a daily necessity and this requirement was met by the employment of the water-carrier, known as 'Sakka'.⁵⁹

Travelling in the Medieval times was not only unsafe but also tedious. To facilitate the travellers, 'Sarais',⁶⁰

57. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 57; Also, Arthakatha, p.3.

58. Rahiman vilas, p.29, v.7.

59. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 55.

60. Akbarnama (Beveridge), III, p.381. "-----a home in a foreign land."

or rest-houses were built at regular intervals. These 'Sarais' had inn-keepers- both men and women, known as 'Bhatiyars' and 'Bhatiyarins',⁶¹ respectively, who provided food and facilities to the travellers on payment.

There were people specializing in the production of utensils etc. They were called 'Thathera'.⁶² They must have been in quite a big number as utensils such as pots, pans etc. also required their services for mending also. And, if, they needed polish and brightness, the 'Sikligar'⁶³ were there to do the needful.

Many a houses were made of mud and thatched roof⁶⁴. Even the stone or brick - built houses, had a 'Kutchra' courtyards. Therefore, they needed regular plastering with the cow-dung or simple mud. This was done by the 'Thopin'.⁶⁵

The people also used to read and write, for which they needed paper, as well as, ink. And, These things were manufactured locally by the people skilled in their jobs. The 'Kagdin',⁶⁶ or

61. Rahiman vilas, p. 32, v. 45 & 46.

62. Rahiman Vilas, p.37.v,106.

63. Kabir Granthawali, p.106, v. 3, Also , Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 53.

64. Kabir Granthawali, p.310, v. 12; Also, Padmavet, pp.355-356, v.356 Terry, p.129, Also, Mauncci; p.299; Bernier, p.252.

65. Rahiman vilas, p.36, v.92.

66. Ibid, p.37, v.108

the paper - maker tried to meet the growing demand of the paper. And, the ink-makers were known as 'Masikarin'.⁶⁷

Similarly, we get a reference of the soap-manufacturers, who produced it locally. They were known as 'Sabnigarin'.⁶⁸ They manufactured soap-a thing of much need in everyday life.

The other professional groups mentioned, include, the 'Kachchi' or 'Kachchin',⁶⁹ that is, those who grew the vegetables.

They were a specialized branch of cultivators. But, those who sold vegetables formed yet another group. These were known as 'Konjar' or 'Konjari',⁷⁰ or, also, 'Kunjar' and 'Kunjari' respectively.

Then there were those who made bows and arrows, known as 'Kamagir' and 'Tirgir'.⁷¹

As the horses formed an integral part of the life in the sixteenth century, North India, the ferrier or the 'Nalband',⁷² assumed all the more importance. He fitted the horse-shoes on the feet of the horses, and was much in demand.

67. Rahim vilas, p.37, v.110.

68. Ibid, p. 36, verses 90 and 91.

69. Rahiman vilas, p.31, verses 35 & 36.

70. Ibid, p. 30, verses 23 & 24.

71. Ibid, p.32, v.47.

72. Ibid, p.39, v. 134.

Then we come across a reference of the Muslim workers both men and women, who mended & made the 'Duff', a type of small drum-a musical instrument . Their makers and menders were called 'Duffali' and 'Duffalini'.⁷³ Then there were smaller pots,⁷⁴ which were used for keeping oils etc. These were known as 'Kuppa' or 'Kuppi' and their makers, came to be known as 'Dabgarin'.⁷⁵

Bhang was a popular intoxicant used by the people of the Medieval India. Their sellers were called 'Bhangeri' and their women- folk- 'Bhangerini'.⁷⁶

We also get a reference of the wood-cutter or wood - feller, who was known as 'Lakadhara', as well as, 'Lakadharin' or 'KathiHari'.⁷⁷

Similarly, we have references of a class of people, whose profession was to sell grass- must have been for the use of the cattlees. That, this class existed at the subsistence level

73. Rahiman vilas, p. 38, v. 126.

74. These pots must have been similar to the modern ink pots.

75. Rahiman vilas, p.36, v. 100.

76. Ibid, p. 38, v. 116.

77. Ibid, p. 38, v. 122.

is clear from its description by Rahim :

कहि रहीम धन बदि घटे, जात धनिन की बात ।

घटे बढे उनको कहा, घास बेचि जे खात ।।⁷⁸

Thus, it is evident that the grass-sellers, too, had come to occupy a peripheral place in the social orbit.

Acrobats and Jugglers Etc.

The Acrobats or 'Nats' are regularly referred to, in the literature of the sixteenth century. We have a specific references of the 'Nat' or acrobat as those people who received money on special occasions :

नाउ बारी भाट नट राम निहावरि पाई ।⁷⁹

Jayasi calls their women-folk as 'Bedinis',⁸⁰ and talks about their mastery of various tricks which they performed with lightening speed :

जानहुँ गति बेडिनि देखराई । बाँह डोलाइ जीउ से जाई ।⁸¹

78. Rahiman vilas, p.4, v. 30.

79. Manas, p.290, v. 319.

80. Padnavat, p. 109, f.n. 7.

81. Padnavat, pp.108-109, v. 112.

Similarly, there are ample references of 'Nat' in the verses
Surdas too.⁸²

Thus, it appears, that, they put on different masks
and make-ups while, showing their tricks. They were also adept
in climbing over the heads and shoulders of others in pyramid-
like formations and, kept the spectators glued to their tricks.:

ताकें मूँड़ यदि नाचति है मोचति नीच नटी ।⁸³

They also performed tricks with their eyes covered, that is,
tied with a piece of cloth.⁸⁴ They danced and made various postures,
as per the musical rhythms, wearing various dresses or make-ups-
thus entertaining people.⁸⁵

They would also mould their bodies, flex them and
climb up on the ropes or bamboo poles.⁸⁶ They had, thus, formed
a separate professional class among the entertainers too.

82. Sur Sagar, I, p. 31, v. 98.

83. Sur Sagar, I, p. 31, v. 98.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid, pp. 67-68, v. 205; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.35, v. 76.

86. Rahiman vilas, p.11, v.101; Also, p.34, v. 71.

Since, they depended on their skills and tricks for their living, they also became greedy- with a desire to earn maximum, from each performance :

ज्यों बहु कला काष्ठि दिसरावे , सोभ न हूटत नट के ।⁸⁷

Those who performed various tricks entertained people and, thereby, carried their livelihood were also known as 'Bajigars'.⁸⁸ They tamed and trained monkeys, tied them to a string and, these monkeys, then exhibited their tricks and entertained people.⁸⁹

They put on various forms and expressions to entertain the masses.⁹⁰ Their expressions kept changing and the eyes moved throughout depicting various emotions.⁹¹ Kabirdas, while, referring to the variety of the world, compares it to the world of the Bajigar, which is changing continuously and is never stationary

बाजीगर संसार कबीरा, जानी ठारो पास ।।⁹²

87. Sur Sagar I, pp.96-97, v.292.

88. Rahiman vitas, p.11, v. 118.

89. Sur Sagar, I, p. 108, v. 326 : "

90. Kabir Granthawali, p.209, v.109.

91. Sur Sagar, II, p. 128, v. 3009.

92. Kabir Granthawali, p. 287, v.34.

That, their women-folk were also adept in performing these various tricks is evident from the perusal of contemporary Hindi literature of the sixteenth century. They are referred to as 'Nati',⁹³ or 'Bajigarin',⁹⁴ or even 'Bedini',⁹⁵.

It appears that, they had made their presence felt in the Medieval Indian Society.

But, their emergence as a separate class of professionals was quite recent then. They were, thus kept lower down in the societal order and, hence referred to, as 'Naach.' or low -born in the contemporary literature.⁹⁶

93. Sur Sagar, I, p.16, v.45.

94. Rahiman vilas, p.38, v.118.

95. Padmavat, pp.108-109, v.112.

96. Sur Sagar, I, p.31, v.198.

Thieves, Robbers, Gamblers Etc :

In the sixteenth century North India, we come across, certain professions which are difficult to classify as classes- but, there was one similarity running through them- that, they were all of a parasitical nature.⁹⁷ The votaries of these professions or occupations did not take to an honest means of livelihood. They adopted a short cut to attain wealth or gain money.

This category includes the professional gamblers as referred to by Kabirdas :

- - - - - जूवारी ह्ये जेम हारु ।⁹⁸

Abdur Rahim Khan-Khana has also mentioned about them⁹⁹ and so has Surdas.¹⁰⁰

Rahim had, in fact, categorized the thieves with the gamblers :

- - - - - जूवारी, चोर , तबार ।¹⁰¹

97. Mathur, A.P., Thesis, A.U., p.237.

98. Kabir Granthawali, p.376, v.11.

99. Rahiman Vilas, p.19, v. 183.

100. Sur Sagar, II, p.6, v. 2397.

101. Rahiman vilas, p.19,v. 183.

In Surdas, too, we find them mentioned together :

चोर बुवार संग बरु करिये , - - - - - 102

In Surdas we also find regular reference about the thieves. Thus, it seems that, it became quite prevalent - as a means of livelihood- in the period of our study.¹⁰³ Jayasi, too, has referred to their activities.¹⁰⁴

The thievery or stealing had been perfected as a technique by the thieves. Being skilled, they entered a house- full of inhabitants and accomplished their job :

जैसे चोर भरे घर पैस्त , बैठत रतत खरे ॥¹⁰⁵

As they were adept in the easy means of earning their bread butter, they never felt like leaving the profession that became a means of survival and subsistence for them :

जैसे चोर तजे नहिं चोरी , बखे वहे करी री ।¹⁰⁶

102. Sur Sagar, II, p.6, v. 2397.

103. Sur Sagar, I, pp.60-61, V.186; Also S.S; II, p.108, v.2903 & p.109, v.2908.

104. Aakhri Kalam in Jayasi Granthawali, p.344, v.14.

105. Sur Sagar, II, p.110, v. 2917.

106. Sur Sagar, II, pp. 122-123, v.2979.

But, sometimes in their greed they also suffered a loss- were either caught or went bare-handed :

करम हीन रहि मन लखो , धँसो बड़े घर चोर ।
चिंतित ही बड़ लाभ के , जागत हवैगो भोर ॥¹⁰⁷

Apart from the gamblers and thieves, we also find a regular reference to the 'Thugs',¹⁰⁸ Surdas has also mentioned them in his Sur Sagar.¹⁰⁹ They used to win their bread by befooling people and, by the use of stratagem :

पाँचो देखि प्रगट ठाढ़े तग हठनि तगौरी खाई ॥¹¹⁰

That, the smugglers, too, had started their profession is evident in a verse of Surdas :

तस्कर ज्यों सुकृत धन लेहि । उरु हरि -भजन करन नहिं देखि ।
ज्ञानी इनको संग न करे । तस्कर जानि दूरि परिहरे ॥¹¹¹

But, it seems that, it was not rampant, as we do not have regular and repeated references to it in the literature of our period of study.

107. Sur Sagar, II, pp.122-123, v. 2979.

108. Bihari Satsai, p.17, v.556; Also 252 Vaishnavon ki varta, p.21.

109. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 60-61, v. 186.

110. Ibid; p.61, v. 187; Also, p. 750, v. 2032.

111. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 153- 154, v. 411.

Surdas has also referred to the article -lifters, who lifted things and run away. These were known as 'Uchhakka',¹¹² Others were pick-pockets or 'Ganthi kata'¹¹³, living on it. We also find a mention of those using force to gain money or materials. Since, they used the wooden stick as a means of forcing others to part with their belongings they were called 'Lath- Bansi'¹¹⁴. And, Surdas calls them Social deviants or 'Apmargi' and their means as unjust.¹¹⁵

But, Surdas had included the robbers or 'batpars' (also Batmars) in his list of the social deviants :

चोर , डंड , बटपार , कडावत , अपमार्गी अन्यायी ये ॥¹¹⁶

And, for the act of robbery he has used the term 'Batpari'.¹¹⁷

Another contemporary poet Jayasi also mentions about them - but, calls them 'Batmar' ¹¹⁸ a slightly different word from the 'Batpar'.

112. Sur Sagar I, pp. 60-61, v. 186.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. Sur Sagar, II, p.108, v. 2903; Also, p.109, v. 2908.

116. Sur Sagar, II, p.108, v. 2903.

117. Sur Sagar, I, pp.60-61, v. 186.

118. Padmavat, p. 131, v. 136. Also, Mrigavati, p.311, v. 360.

These robbers had organized themselves in groups and bands. They chose their locations **after** a proper geographical study and, then way-laid the travellers etc. enroute.¹¹⁹

As a matter of fact, they chose hilly locations or those with a dense growth. They also chose the forests with small walking tracts and inaccessible passes through the hills or forests :

एहि आगे परबत की पाटी । विषम पहार अगम सुठि घाटी ।

बिच बिच खोह नदी और नारा । ठाँवहिं ठाँव उठहिं बटपारा ।¹²⁰

It appears from the perusal of the Hindi literature of the sixteenth century, that the robbers did not limit their activities on the active trade and travellers' routes, they were also active in the towns and cities of Medieval North India.¹²¹

The Beggars

The beggars have been referred to by the poets of Medieval India.¹²² Jayasi specifically mentions about them in his Padmavat :

कीन्हैसि कोइ भिखारी कोइ धनी । - - - - - 123

119. Padmavat, p.131, v.136.

120. Ibid.

121. Padmavat, pp. 467-468, v. 453; Also, Aakhari Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, p. 344, v. 14.

122. Padmavat, p.3, v. 3; Rahiman Vilas, p.14, v. 132.

123. Ibid.

Another poet, influenced by the Sufi thought, Manjhan mentions about them.¹²⁴ In Qutbun's Mrigavati-too, we get a reference of the beggars, which proves that in order to eke out a living they also travelled to different places :

हों परदेसी " आदि " " भिक्षारी " । - - - - -¹²⁵

That, they were a professional class cutting across the lines of the castes, sub-castes etc. is evident as nowhere in the literature, we find mention of beggars on caste lines. They were, thus, a parasitic professional class.

The Gardener or 'Mali' :

Gardens were tended and maintained in India from the early days. After the advent of the Mughals, the gardens received a tremendous impetus, as Babar himself was interested in them¹²⁶ He made them an integral part of his Architecture.¹²⁷ Thus , it became imperative for the state, too, to engage a number of gardeners. These gardeners were known as ' Mali',¹²⁸ and,

124. Madhu Malti, p. 99, v. 232.

125. Mrigavati; p. 127, v. 156, Also Rahiman vilas, p.3, v.19.

126. Babar nama, pp.381,665; pp.531-532;pp.533,634 etc.

127. P. Brown , p. 89.

128. Ardhakatha, p.3.

due to the new impetus given to it, must have assumed an important role in the society of the sixteenth century, North India.

That, the example of the king or Badshah, would have been emulated by his subordinates, Chieftains, Officers and the richer section of the society is evident with the employment of a number of 'Malis' by them :

एक एक ऊठ "संवारीहिं" चरि चरि पंच पंच मालि ।।¹²⁹

They also made a special head-gear worn by men on marriages known as 'Mor' :

मालिनि आउ मोर ते गाथे - - - - -¹³⁰

It seems, that the Mor was made of leaves, flowers etc. and, thus, prepared by the 'Malin'¹³¹ or the Mali's wife.

On marriages and other socio-religious ceremonies, a special decoration was done, known, as 'Toran', or attaching leaves (especially mango leaves) on a string and putting them on the doors, windows, entrances and arches etc.¹³²

129. Mrigavati, p.167, v. 201; Also, p. 168, v. 202.

130. Padmavat, p. 130, v. 135.

131. Ibid.

132. A custom practised even today.

And, this was also done by the Malin or women folk of this professional class :

मालिनी बाँधे तोरना । - - - - - 133

It is evident, that, they constituted an important class in the Medieval Indian Society.

Fishermen or 'Machchuwara' :

Kabirdas has referred to this class of professionals in his verses and calls them 'Mahroo'.¹³⁴ They used the hook (i.e. fishline) to catch the fishes.¹³⁵

मत्का लाया बरपता , अब क्यू आवे हाथ ।¹³⁶

And, that the hook was known as 'Galka'. Apart from the hook, they also used the net or 'Jal' to catch fishes.¹³⁷

133. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 40.

134. Kabir Granthawali, pp. 191-192, v. 77.

135. Kabir Granthawali, p. 51, v. 16.

136. Ibid.

137. Kabir Granthawali, pp. 191-192, v. 77, Also, p.344,v.7.

The House-hold workers And Servants :

A very rich man kept a cook¹³⁸ in his kitchen, which was hygienically a clean place.¹³⁹ The cooks were, generally Brahmans.¹⁴⁰ But, he had a number of 'Kahars' and helpers to assist him **during** the preparation of meals, and for cleaning the utensils.¹⁴¹

They also kept falcons or 'Baz' to hunt a number of birds¹⁴² for which they were specially trained by Bazdar.¹⁴³ Thus, the name of this professional group came from their association with the 'Baz'. Practised by the Emperor the 'Bazbaji' must have percolated down to the richer sections, thereby, necessitating the employment of a number of these skilled workers.

The richer section of the populace used horses for riding, thereby, making it imperative to keep a servant for the upkeep and training of the horse. He was known as 'chirwadar' or 'Saiyees'.¹⁴⁴

138. Rahiman viṭas, p.8, v.76.

139. Ain III, p.24. (Sarkar)

140. Pyrard, I, p. 377, Also Ovington, p.312; And Mrigavati, p.367, v. 424.

141. Ardhkatha, p.3.

142. Ain, pp. 304-307.

143. Rahiman viṭas, p.37, v. 112.

144. Rahiman viṭas, p. 39, v. 135.

They used carts for the purposes of conveyance and transportation. These carts were driven by the drivers, known as, 'Gadi Bar',¹⁴⁵

They also kept elephants, looked after by a 'Mahawat',¹⁴⁶ The camel- drivers, similarly kept by them were known as 'Sarwani',¹⁴⁷ Apart from the regular gate-keeper and the usherer,¹⁴⁸ there were special guards to keep the house well protected. And, since, they carried guns with them, they are referred to as 'Bandookchi'.¹⁴⁹

The Slaves :

The slaves were generally kept by the richer section of the society for a number of works.¹⁵⁰ That, due to the Persian influence, the term 'Gulam' became a prevalent term for them is also evident, from a perusal of SurSagar.¹⁵¹

145. Rahiman vilas, p. 39, v. 128.

146. Ibid, v. 130.

147. Ibid, v. 132.

148. A.P. Mathur, p.229.

149. Rahiman vilas, p. 33, v.60

150. Ain, p.263: Akbar preferred calling them 'Chelas'

151. Sur Sagar, II, p.99. v. 2857.

Surdas, in fact, uses the Hindi equivalent (Dasi & Das) also :

जाति - पाँति कुलहू ते न्यारो, हे दासी का जायो ।¹⁵²

Thus, the slave's son, too, was considered an out-caste. They were neither given a place in the caste hierarchy, nor could they crystallize into another caste or sub-caste is, thus-evident. Thus, according to Surdas' depiction, he had no social status in the Medieval Indian Social stratification.^{153.}

The slaves were, generally, bought by the slave dealers or Dalals¹⁵⁴ in times of famines and epidemics, when either the parents sold their children or they became orphans, because of the parents' death and, so, were bought into captivity.¹⁵⁵ The owners who, thus bought them, had every right to sell off their slaves.¹⁵⁶ On certain ceremonial occasions, too, the slaves were given as presents. For example, they were included among other things - in the dowry too :

कंवल बसन बिचिहत्त पटोरे । भाँति भाँति बहु मोल न धोरे ।

गण रथ तुरग दास अरु दासी । - - - - -¹⁵⁷

Tulsidas¹⁵⁸ and Surdas¹⁵⁹ have both used

the word 'Dasi' for the slave-girls. But, somewhere, later on, in the Medieval period, the nomenclature that gained prevalence was 'Londi'.¹⁶⁰

152. Sur Sagar, I, p.79, v. 244.

153. Ibid.

154. Refer to the Matiram Satsai, p.493, v. 472.

155. Sur Sagar, (Bombay), p.408.

156. Kabir Granthawali (K.N.P.S., Varanasi), p.124; Also, Ain, p.263.

157. Manas, p.299, v.325.2; Also 84 Vaishnavo'n ki varta, p.36.

158. Ibid.

159. Sur Sagar, I, p.79, v.244.

CHAPTER IV

The Position of Women :

The study of any Society or Social structure is, in fact, incomplete without a study of women in that society. Her status, as a matter of fact, is the measuring yard for assessing the standard of culture of any age or clime.¹ Hindi literature of the 16th century is full of the glimpses of the condition of women in that period. Needless to say the views of the poets are the reflections of the contemporary social milieu.²

Manu, the ancient Hindu law- giver has ascribed a dependent,³ yet honourable status to women in our society.⁴ Similarly, the Muslim women, too, enjoyed a dignified status in Society, as ordained in the Holy Quran.⁵ Thus, it is apparent that, a change in the social laws and customs vis-a-vis the women- which came to be evolved, later on, were a result of the changed set-up of things or circumstances.⁶ Thus, the position

1. Misra, Rekha, 'Women In Mughal India', p.1.

2. Marwick, The Nature of History, p.70. Also, A Fitzsimous, Introduction. and A. Toynbee, p.534.

3. Manu, p. 195.

4. Ibid, Manu, pp. 85-86.

5. The Holy Quran (Eng. Tr.) pp. 205-206.

6. P.N. Chopra, Glimpses of social life, p. 62.

of the women deteriorated during the Turkish rule in India.⁷ This is, in fact corroborated by Al-beruni's descriptions. According to him, the Hindus always consulted their wives in the hours of problems and crises.⁸ Thus, it was in the period after Al-beruni, that this change might have come about, that is, as an impact of the Turkish rule in India. This change was in fact, basically, due to the growth of general sensuality and sexual indulgences, due to which, an unhealthy attitude developed on all sides.⁹

The contemporary situation has been aptly summed up by Tulsidas :

काम क्रोध लोभादि मद पृबल मोह के धारि ।

तिन्ह महँ अति दाख दुख मायाखी नारि ।¹⁰

She was considered to be 'Maya' or illusion personified¹¹ and, thus, responsible for all the ills, evils and calamities in the society.

7. Misra, p. 129.

8. Sachau, I, p. 181.

9. K.M. Ashraf, pp. 135 - 136.

10. Manas, p. 674, v. 43. The same verse is in 'Dohawali' too, p. 91, v. 266.

11. Ibid; Also, Kabir, p. 67, v. 9 & p. 197, v. 87.

That, she was not the truth, rather was an illusion
has also been brought forth by Sant Dadu Dayal :

नारी बैरणि पुख की , एरिषा बैरी नारि ।

अंत काल दुःखें मुर , कछु न आया हाथ ॥¹²

It was considered that, it was woman, who distorted a man's affection, intelligence and mind,¹³ thus, depriving him of Bhakti, salvation and knowledge.¹⁴ They were, thus, condemned not only as poisonous¹⁵ and inflammable,¹⁶ but were also treated as the gateway to Hell¹⁷. Kabir, in fact calls them totally untrue :

कबीर जोरु जूठणि जगत की , - - - - -¹⁸

They were also treated as less intelligent,¹⁹ fools and ignorants.²⁰ She was not only a fool but also very weak,²¹ that is, easily swayed. They were, contemptuously compared to drums, yokels, low-caste men and beasts- all to be beaten to keep them on the right path :

दोल गवाँर सुद पसु नारी । सकल ताड़ना के अधिकारी ॥²²

12. Dadu Dayal ki Bani, I, pp. 131-132.

13. Kabir, p. 67, v. 8.

14. Ibid, v. 10.

15. Ibid, v. 11, Also, p. 197, v. 87.

16. Ibid, v. 12,

17. Kabir, p. 68, v. 15; Also, p. 69, v. 24.

18. Ibid, v. 14.

19. Padmavat, p. 127, v. 132, Rahiman vilas, p. 47, v. 56.

20. Manas, p. 121, v. 119.2; Also, p. 64, v. 57 (क.) And, p. 665, v. 34.2 Sur Sagar, II, p. 366, v. 4011 and, also, Rahiman vilas, p. 6, v. 57,

And, Padawali Bangiya of Vidyapati Thakur, p. 256.

21. Manas, p. 1037, v. 144.8; Also, Padawali Bangiya, p. 256.

22. Manas, p. 769, v. 583.

It was the physical charm of the women by which, they beguiled and, in fact, managed to rule the men-folk.²³ But, ultimately, the men's feel deprived and humiliated once they realize the truth.²⁴ But, they continued to be trapped by these charmers :

तमसि फिरसि ठगिनी तुम नारि १²⁵

The women were, thus, considered to disrupt all austerity, discipline and order in men's life and drained these qualities as, if, drying the water pond.²⁶ They, in fact, supposedly, patronized the ills or the evil qualities like lust and greed²⁷ rather, they were condemned as the mines of evil qualities, themselves.²⁸

It is, generally believed that the women cry a lot and, are, thus, able to influence the men-folk by invoking sympathies. But, since, she was not the truth really- even her tears were false and were supposed to be the crocodile tears.²⁹

23. Kabir, pp.67-68, verses 8, 10 & 14; Also, Manas, p.1037, v.115. and, also Sur Sagar, II, pp.83-84, v.2779.

24. Kabir, p.67, v. 9; Also, p.197, v.87 and Geetawali, p.238, v.57.

25. Sur Sagar, I, p.804, v.2199; Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.83-84, v.2779.

26. Manas, p.674, v.43.1.

27. Manas, p.675, v.43.2, v.43.3 & v.43.4; Also, p.639, v.16.3.

28. Manas, p.675, v.44; Also, p.473, v.161.2.

29. Manas, p.373, v. 46.4 & v. 47; Also, p.473, v. 161.2.

They were, therefore, never expected to be trusted upon. The men were not only warned to remain aloof from them, so as, not to be charmed by their guiles,³⁰ but, also, never to trust them- rather, they were to be kept in control always :

उरग, सुरंग, नारी , नृपति , नीच जाति हपियार ।

रहिमन इन्हें सँभारिए , पलटत लगे न बार ॥³¹

Thus, in those times, the actions of women were considered to be constituents of what came to be termed as "Tiyamaya"³² or the illusionary world created by her charms and guiles. And, it was not possible for men to understand the phenomenon - it was accepted as beyond human analysis :

सत्य कहिहं कवि नारि सुभाउ । सब बिधि अगह अगाध दुराउ ॥

निज प्रीतिबिहु बल गहि जाई । जानि न जाइ नारि गति भाई ॥³³

For these several reasons enumerated above, we find that the women were really treated as condemned - so much so, that their loss (i.e. death) was never considered a great loss by the men.³⁴

30. Manas, p.677, v.46(kh.) ; Also, p.356, v.26.4; Also, Kabir, p.57, v.9 and, p.197, v.87.

31. Rahim, p.2, v.15; Also, Manas, p.668, v.36.5.

32. Manas, p.350, v.20.2.

33. Manas, p.373, v. 46.4 & v. 47; Also, p. 473, v.161.2.

34. Manas, p.835, v. 60.6.

The too much freedom given to women was never considered a positive thing it was like spoiling them at times-just as the 'heavy' rains destroyed or dissolved the mud-walls in the fields.³⁵ Yet, on the other hand -- analysing the cause of their degradation, the intellectuals or Hindi literateurs of the sixteenth century pointed to their being in bondage as its main reason :

कत बिधि सुखीं नारि जग माहीं । पराधीन सपनेहुँ सुखु नाहीं ।³⁶

Thus, a woman, who was dependent since her birth on father, husband and son respectively³⁷ could never remain contented or happy. Therefore, their very creation was questioned on this basis - because of the futility and their helplessness.³⁸ It is, however, evident from the afore-mentioned verse --³⁹ that the woman once born was, however, condemned to degraded life.⁴⁰

35. Manas, p.695, v.14.4.

36. Manas, p.105, v.101.3.

37. Manu, pp.327-328.

38. Manas, p.105, v.101.3

39. Ibid, p.105, v.101.3.

40. Ibid.

Birth of Daughters :

As the social structure could be best understood by the study of women as its integral part,⁴¹ similarly, the analysis of the circumstances effected or created by the birth of a baby-girl was considered to be the best mirror of the position of women in any society.

The birth of a daughter was never welcome, it was rather considered inauspicious.⁴² The very silence with which a female child was received was, in fact, indicative of peoples disappointment⁴³ - a relic of the Rajput age.⁴⁴ This continued to be true and especially in the royal families in the medieval times. Only women rejoiced and feasted on daughter's birth, whereas, the whole court participated in the celebrations on the birth of princes.⁴⁵ Even Emperor Akbar did a lot when a son was born to him.⁴⁶

A wife who gave birth to girls in succession was not only despised but, also, divorced sometimes.⁴⁷

41. R. Misra, p.1.

42. P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.111.

43. Tod, II, pp. 739-740.

44. Ibid : The Rajput Says " Accursed to the day when a woman child is born to me."

45. Storia, II, p.343.

46. Tuzuk (R. & B.), I, pp.1-2.

47. Akbarnama, III, pp. 83 & 378; Also, Storia, II, p.343.

The deplorable custom of girl -infanticide was, however, confined only to a very minor section of the less cultured Rajput families.⁴⁸

Thus, we find that everyone desired sons to be born to them.⁴⁹ And, among the masses, we have evidences of celebrations on the birth of a boy, especially in SurSagar,⁵⁰ Manas,⁵¹ Padmavat⁵² and Mrigavati.⁵³

The Parda System :

Women held an honoured position in the vedic age and were considered quite competent to take part in every aspect of social, intellectual and spiritual life of the race.⁵⁴ Though, there was a gradual deterioration in their position during the period following the Vedic age,⁵⁵ yet , there are no evidences of their seclusion or of child marriage.⁵⁶ The parda system, in all probability, was unknown in Ancient India.⁵⁷

48. Altekar, p.9.

49. Tuzuk (R & B), I, pp.1-2; Manas, p.180, v.188.1 & 188.2; And, also, Mrigavati, pp.9-11, verses 13 & 14.

50. Sur Sagar, I, pp.191-192, and pp.265-275.

51. Manas, pp. 183-186.

52. Padmavat, p.72, v.73.

53. Mrigavati, pp. 11-13 verses 15, 16 & 17.

54. H.S. Gour, 'Hindu law', p.1174; Also, D.M. Mitter, 'The Position of women in Hindu law, pp.600-601.

55. D.M. Mitter, pp.63, 79, 97 & 100.

56. Ibid, p. 170 & pp. 196-198.

57. Altekar, p. 206.

With the advent of Islam and, the subsequent release of fresh forces and ideas had its impact on the Indian women. And, as a result of their following a strict 'Parda' system⁵⁸, it was generally, adopted in India too.⁵⁹

It may have gained some roots in medieval north India, since, the Muslims became predominant in this part of the country. Where there influence was less, the parda and veil were not well established or, if established, it was only very nominal, as in regions from the Rajputana to the Deccan.⁶⁰

Thus, it is evident that, it was adopted by the Hindu women as a protective measure to save their honour at the hands of the foreign invaders, as well as, a tendency to imitate the ruling class.⁶¹ For these reasons, it seems, that the parda system did become prevalent in North India and Bengal.⁶² However, it could never gain credence among

58. Persian women and their ways, pp.60-64; Also Badaoni, II, pp.404-406.

59. A. Rashid, p.142; Also D.N. Mitter, p.170.

60. M. Habib : Indian Culture and Social life at the Time of Turkish Invasion, pp.109-110.

61. R. Misra, pp. 134-135.

62. Ibid; Also, Padavali Banjiya of Vidyapati Thakur.

the Hindu masses on the whole and was observed mainly by the Muslim ladies.⁶³ The Hindu ladies could move out of the doors with little or no restrictions, even as late as the seventeenth century.⁶⁴ It was, however, considered enough for them to have a sheet of cloth or 'dupatta' to cover their heads.⁶⁵ only, "the women of fashion in India are closely preserved by their husbands who forbid them the very sight of strangers."⁶⁶

The Hindus veil was not necessarily, a separate piece of cloth⁶⁷ - rather, they preferred covering their head or even fore-head by the end of the 'sari' or clothe that they wore. This was known as 'Ghoonghat'.⁶⁸

----- । छुट काटया सती न कोई ।⁶⁹

63. R. Misra, p. 134, Deleat, p.81.

64. Travels In India in the seventeenth Century, p.182.

65. P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.111.

66. Ovington, p.211; Also, Mandelslo, p.51; Storia, II, pp.333-334 and De laet, p.81.

67. Persian women And their ways, p.61.

68. Kabir, pp.275-276, v.15; Miran Madhuri, p.80, v.15, Meera ka Dhan, p.9, v.12; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.1, v.4.

69. Kabir , pp. 275-276, v.15.

Kabir says that putting on a veil does not signify the morality or purity of women. It may, thus, be inferred that it was customary and, therefore, used⁷⁰.

They were, in fact, expected to use this veil or 'ghoonghat' while, talking to their elders,⁷¹ as a mark of respect. Moreover, it was treated as an additional ornament of a newly-wed bride- who was not expected to be shameless and quit the veil :

बोलि न सकव, सजन संग गोहने, छूँघट जाह न खोल रे ॥⁷²

That, it was considered amoral to talk to other men or strangers without a proper veil- or a symbolic veil :

तुन धरि ओट कहत बेदेही । सुमिरि अवग्रति परम सनेही ॥⁷³

Thus, the 'Trin Ot' or Symbolic veil was considered enough,⁷⁴ amongst the Hindu women of the sixteenth century North India.

70. Kabir,, pp.275- 276 v.15.

71. Kaharanama, p.88.

72. Ibid, p.92.

73. Manas, p.723,v.83.

74. Ibid; Also, Sur Sagar, I,pp.212-213,v.521 & p.214,v.523.

Early Marriage or Child Marriage :

Early marriages or child marriages grew into vogue in the Medieval Indian Society and became a popular feature of the social life in the Mughal period.⁷⁵ Both Hindus and Muslims fell a prey to the circumstances and practised this evil custom. 'Hindus, as a protection against Muslim invaders, who would not usually carry off married women, resorted to early marriage of their daughters.'⁷⁶

Ralph Fitch while referring to this practice, especially among the Brahmans of Bengal says, "Their daughters be married at or before the age of ten."⁷⁷ The Mughal Emperor, Akbar himself, was, as a matter of fact, totally against early marriages and wished to check them.⁷⁸

By the time of Jahangir, however, marriages could be performed, when they were children of four years of age.⁷⁹

75. R. Misra, p. 131.

76. P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.126,f.n.66.

77. Foster, Early Travels, p.84; Also, p.17; Bengal In

The 16th Century, p. 178; Badaoni, II, p.349; Altekar, p.73.

78. Ain, I, p.277.

79. Pelsaert, p.84; Withington (Early Travels), p.221;
Mandelslo, Travels, p. 58.

The famous Hindi poet of the sixteenth century, Jayasi has referred to this evil practice of child marriage. Accordingly the father of a girl, who attained the age of twelve became worried for her marriage :

बारह बरिस माँह भइ रानी । राखै सुना संजोग समानी ⁸⁰ ।

Even Tulsidas mentions about his Ram to be a 'kishore' or adolescent, when he had gone for the 'Sita Swayamvar', where he was married⁸¹. That, he was still almost child-like is evident.⁸² Moreover, King Dasrath asks his wives to look after their daughters -in-law who are mere children :

बधू लरिकनी पर घर आई । - - - - - ⁸³

Another poet of that period has, however, mentioned the age of fourteen years, as the marriageable age, for the girls :

पिथिमी पति जग गाहक , दस औ चारि निदान । ⁸⁴

80. Padmavat, p. 54, v. 54.

81. Manas, p. 210, v. 222.1 -----

Also, Geetawali, p.107, v. 62 and p. 130, v.80.

82. Manas, p.238, v.255.2; Also Kavita-wali, pp.18-19, v.21.

83. Manas, p.325, v. 354.4.

84. Madhu Malti, p.85, v.10, Also, Badeoni, II, p.315:

"Boys were not to marry before the age of sixteen, nor girls before fourteen."

Polygamy :

Hindus with the exception of a few princes and prosperous persons, strictly restricted them-selves to monogamy, as enjoined by their social custom.⁸⁵ In the extreme case, when a wife proved to be barren they had the liberty to marry another.⁸⁶

Among the poets of the sixteenth century, we found Qutbun⁸⁷ and Jayasi⁸⁸ both of whom have referred to this practice. Tulsidas, in order to portray a complete picture of the contemporary society, wisely selected the story of mythological Ram for his 'Ram Charit Manas' and, therein, we find a reference of polygamy.⁸⁹ But, in order to maintain the social order, he has himself, suggested people to be monogamous.⁹⁰

Kabir, too, has referred to the practice of polygamy :

पकरयो हंस जम से चाल्यो , मंदिर रोवे नारि फी ॥⁹¹

85. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.112; Also Bengal in the 16th Century, p.178; Hamilton, I, p. 159; Also, Herbert's Travels, p.39; Refer, De Laet, p.86.

86. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.112; Ain, I, p.277; Also, Badaoni, II, p.367.

87. Mrigavati, pp. 325-332, v. 377-384.

88. Padmavat, p. 127, v.132; Also, pp. 438-458, verses 433-445.

89. Manas, pp.180-181, verses 189.3; Refer also to Chandayan pp.95-96, v.13 and Prithvi Raj Raso, pp.293-328.

90. Manas, p.941, v. 24.1, Ain, I, p.277.

91. Kabir, p. 202, v. 96.

But, it seems to be practised only by the richer section is obvious- as we have the description of a rich man's mansion, where his wives are wailing after his death.⁹²

Dowry :

The dowry seems to be an old custom, which, gradually, became rigorous⁹³ in the Medieval period. And, due to this reason, the marriages of the girls, sometimes, became a difficult problem.⁹⁴ At times, the marriages of poor girls depended on the bounty of the state or the benevolence of a Sultan,⁹⁵ or, solely on the generosity of those who were economically well-off.⁹⁶ Thus, it seems that, the dowry formed an important item of marriage expenditure in Medieval India and, even the poor families could not have hoped to escape from it.⁹⁷

That the dowry was prevalent and popular in the sixteenth century North India, is evident from the perusal of the contemporary Hindi literature, where, it has been referred to , as 'Dahej' or 'Daij'.⁹⁸

92. ~~Ibid~~, Kabir, p.202, v.96.

93. R. Misra, p. 131.

94. Ibid; Also, I.F.S., pp. 349- 351.

95. I.F.S., pp.349- 357.

96. Ibid, pp. 447-448; Also Banani, p.117.

97. A Rashid, Society & Culture, p.131.

98. Manas, p.105, v.100.5; Also, p.299, v.325 & p.308, v.333; And Sur Sagar, I, p.195, v.471; Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.542-544, v.4190 & v.4192; Padmavat, pp.273-275, verses 286 and 287; And, Also, Mrigavati, p.121, v. 150.

The dowry included apart from the articles and various other things of daily use things such as 'gold, gems,⁹⁹ and cash (Dams or coins)¹⁰⁰ rugs and clothes, especially, silken clothes;¹⁰¹ precious stones;¹⁰² Decorated chariots and beds.¹⁰³ It even included horses, elephants¹⁰⁴, cows and buffaloes.¹⁰⁵ It also consisted of a number of slaves and slave-girls.¹⁰⁶ However, it seems, that this evil (of dowry-system) was neither as rigorous nor as abused as in Bengal, where even a younger sister of the bride, was given away as a part of the dowry.¹⁰⁷

On the authority of Abul Fazl, it can be assumed that the system of dowry seems to have been absent among the Brahmins of those days.¹⁰⁸

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01. Manas, p.299, v.325.2; Also, Mrigavati, p.114,v.142.
 02. Manas, p. 308,v.332.3 & v. 332.4;Also, Padmavat,p.415,v.410.
 03. Manas (Ibid)
 04. Manas,p. 299,v.325.2; Also, Padmavat, p.415,v.410; And, Mrigavati,p.114,v.142.
 05. Ibid; Also, p.308,v.332.3 & v.332.4;
 06. Manas, p.299, v.325.2, Also, Padmavat, p.415,v.410.
 07. T.C. Dasgupta cited in R. Misra, p.131; Also, K.Datta's History of Bengali Subah, p.71.
 08. Ain (J.& S), III, p.339; R.Misra, p.131; Also, P.N.Chopra, Glimpses of Social life, p.66.

Their Roles As Wives :

The position of wives with regard to their husbands were that of dependents,¹⁰⁹ in honourable subordination, at least, as long as mutual relations remained cordial. Jahangir wrote in his Tuzuk : " It is a maxim of Hindus that no good deed can be performed by men in the social state without the partnership or presence of the wife whom they have styled the half of man." ¹¹⁰

Moreover, the husbands were expected to be loving and affectionate towards their wives.¹¹⁴ They were to have a protective attitude towards their wives-had to care for them, and provide them security.¹¹² The wives, as a matter, seem to control the household expenditure,¹¹³ apart from supervising its general affairs.¹¹⁴

In return, the wives were expected to serve their husbands most loyally, even, if, they were egoistic and short tempered :

तुम्ह बारी पिय बहूँ सक राजा । गरब किरौध आहि सब छाजा । ¹¹⁵

109. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.115; Stavorinus, I, pp.440-441.

110. Tuzuk (R. & B.), I, p.359.

111. Manas, p.618, v.3; Ovington, p.331.

112. Manas, p. 618, v.4 and v.1; Also, p.619, v.1.6.

113. Macauliffe, Sikh Religion, I, pp.2-3; Altekar, p.396.

114. Ibid.

115. Padmavat, p.385, v.381.

In serving their husbands, they should consider themselves as no better than the slaves,¹¹⁶ That is, they should do everything and anything to please their masters. They should in fact, visualize their husbands as the pivot or centre of lives and relationships,¹¹⁷ hence onwards. Thus, once married, they were expected to forget their father's abode - the wealth, prosperity or comforts-they were provided by their fathers.¹¹⁸

They were, further, expected to shower love at the feet of their husbands - howsoever, he may have been.¹¹⁹ There was never a suggestion for them to go against their husbands or their wishes.¹²⁰ Moreover, she should not only do all the house-hold work, despite the presence of a number of servants and maid,¹²¹ but, also remain: strictly obedient to their husbands.¹²²

"ज्यो राखे त्योही रहे आज्ञाकारी देव" ।¹²³

116. Sur Sagar, I, pp.197-198, v.479; Manas; p.623, v.4.5.

117. Manas, p.416, v.97; Also, p.623, v.4.3.

118. Manas, p.416, verses 97.1 and 98.1.

119. Manas, p. 623, v. 4.5.

120. Manas, p.624, v. 4.10.

121. Manas, p.943, v. 23.3.

122. Ibid; Also, p.309, v.333.3.

123. Dadu Dayal ki Bani, p.95.

It is apperent that, they were continuously stressed to treat their husbands as God :

- - - - - । नारिधरसु पति देउ न दूषा ॥¹²⁴

And, thus, serve them, not only continuously and consistently but, also, in all possible manner.¹²⁵ They were expected to fan their husbands¹²⁶ and, to press their feet to drain out the tiredness or exhaustion¹²⁷ Further, they were expected to be righteous and conscientious always and not to have a false pride or ego.¹²⁸

124. Manas, p.105,v.101.2.

125. Manas, p.390,v.66.1.

126. Manas, p.390, v. 66.2; Also Rahim,p.55,v.115.

127. Manas,p.390,v.66.3; Rahim , p.47, v.52 & p.55, v.115.

128. Manas, p.943, v.23.4.

Women and Morality :

We find that women in Medieval India, were expected to conform to a high moral standard and condemned with any violation of it. They were, thus, required to remain aloof and lead almost secluded life. Those wandering about were, in fact, condemned :

लोकलाज हलकानि मेटि कै , बन बन होतत नवल किकोरी ।¹²⁹

And, especially, the women of the higher classes or castes were never expected to move out freely.¹³⁰ They were scolded for it :

माता कहति बड़े की बेटी , लोको लाज न आवति ।¹³¹

This was so, more in the case of the unmarried girls.¹³² They were not even expected to adorn themselves with ornaments and cosmetics.¹³³

कंधारी कन्या' करे सपंगार । सोभ न पावे बिन भरतार ।।¹³⁴

129. Sur Sagar, II, p.32, v.2509; Also, p.33, v. 2514.

130. Sur Sagar, II, p.40, v.2557.

131. Sur Sagar, II, p.41, v.2559 & v. 2561; Also, pp.60-61, v.2665.

132. Refer, 1, 2 & 3 above.

133. Kabir, p.48, v. 125.

134. Ibid.

There was much stress on the fidelity of the women in the sixteenth century India. They were supposed to be loyal and devoted to one man and that was the husband :

एकइ धर्म एक ब्रत नेमा । कार्य बचन मन पति पद प्रेमा ॥¹³⁵

They were, to offer themselves totally at the feet of their husbands :

पतिव्रता गृह आपने करे सुख की सेव ,
ज्यों राखे त्योंही रहे आज्ञाकारी देव ॥¹³⁶

Even Rahim expresses similarly :

मैं अरु मोर पिपरवा, जस जत मीन ।
बिछुष्ट तजत परनवा, रहत अधीन ॥¹³⁷

Thus, her very existence without her spouse was considered impossible.

Though, considered unholy or impure since birth, their salvation lay in total dedication and loyalty to their husbands :

सहज अषावनि नारि पति सेवत सुभ गति लहइ ।¹³⁸

135. Manas, p.623, v.4.5.

136. Dadu Dayal ki Bani, p.95.

137. Rahim, p.50,v.77; Also, Manas, p.623,v.4.3.

138. Dohawali, pp.182-183,v.542; Also, Sur Sagar,II, pp.212-213,v.521 And,p.214,v.523.

Even Surdas has expressed a similar view :

सूर पति सेवा बिना क्यों , तरोगी संसार ॥¹³⁹

Men were also condemned, however, for either having a fancy for other women¹⁴⁰ or for adultery.¹⁴¹ They were warned against lust and entrapment by the physical charms of the women :

देखि नारि मोहित जो होवै । आपनो मूल या बिधि सो सोवै ।¹⁴²

Whereas, among women, those who did not serve their husbands well, were considered as irreligious or deviant or 'Adham'.¹⁴³ They must, therefore, not even consider taking the name of males other than their husbands.¹⁴⁴ In fact, the women loyal to their husbands were respected and considered great¹⁴⁵ and those disloyal were considered to be the most unfortunate women :

हुन मंदिर सुंदर पति त्यागी । अहि नारि पर पुछ अभागी ॥¹⁴⁶

139. Sur Sagar, I, p. 611, v. 1634.

140. Manas, p. 750, v. 37.3.

141. Manas, p. 1015, v. 100.2; Also, p. 1031, v. 111.2.

142. Sur Sagar, I, p. 176, v. 438.

143. Manas, p. 623, v. 4.3; Also, p. 639, v. 16.3.

144. Sur Sagar, I, p. 117, v. 352.

145. Manas, p. 1056, v. 126.3; Also, Dohawali, pp. 182-183, v. 542.

146. Manas, p. 1013, v. 98.2.

Moreover, the loyal women were always loved by their husbands, irrespective of the fact of her appearance, behaviour etc. :

जो मैं पतिव्रता हूँ नारी । कैसे ही रहो सो पीयही पिसारी ॥¹⁴⁷

Under no circumstances, were the women permitted to think of insulting or humiliating their husbands - however, old, sick, infirm, fool, poor, blind, deaf, bad-tempered or totally inefficient they may be.¹⁴⁸

Thus, women were expected to follow strict fidelity or be 'Pativratta'.¹⁴⁹ Strict morality, subservience and devotion to just one man in their lives was supposed to give them enough conviction and will-power. They were, thus not expected to commit 'Sati' by burning in the pyre alongwith their husbands, rather, they were to end their lives by their own wish.¹⁵⁰

147. Kabir, pp. 224-225, v.138.

148. Manas, p.623, v.4.4.

149. Refer 1 above; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.117, v.352.

150. Mrigavati, p.365, v.422; Also, Manas, p.391, v.67 & v.67.1.

And, Also, Dohawali, pp.182-183, v.542.

Among the 'Pativratta' women too, there was no blanket generalization. They were categorized as per their levels of morality, according to the socially accepted norms and standards. The first category or the most perfect 'Pativratta' women were those, who did not even dream of another man.¹⁵¹ The second category constituted of those women, who were neither true nor loyal mentally, but, due to the considerations of religious sanctity and family's prestige, remained so.¹⁵²

The third category of the 'Pativratta' women consists of those who, either, due to lack of opportunity or, due to their own cowardice were not infidels.¹⁵³ And, finally, those who commit adultery were supposed to be destined for eternal hell.¹⁵⁴

151. Manas, p.623, v.4.6 ; Also, p.624,v.4.7.

152. Manas, p.624,v.4.7.

153. Manas, p. 624, v.4.8.

154. Ibid.

SATI :

The greatest tragedy in the life of a Hindu woman was the death of her husband¹⁵⁵. Unlike the Muslims, widow - remarriage was not permitted among the Hindus in the Mughal period, except among some lower classes.¹⁵⁶

The 'Sati' became a popular custom, as it was considered an impossible task for women of high morality and fidelity to dream of a separation from her husband :

सूर स्वामी हैं विमुक्त हवै , सती कैसे भोग - - - - -¹⁵⁷

It was expected of them, to perform 'Sati' alongwith their dead husbands on their cremation.¹⁵⁸ It was performed out of sheer love and loyalty for their dead husband and also dedication to serve them till at the very end of life.¹⁵⁹

155. R. Misra, p. 132.

156. Ibid; Badauni, II, p.367; Therenot, p.119, And, Caveri, pp.256-257.

157. Sur Sagar, I, p.105, v.321; Also, Manas, p.391, verses 67 and 67.1.

158. Kabir, p.119, v. 34;

Padmavat, pp.709-712, verses 648-651;
William Fitch, Early Travels (F) pp.20-22; Withington,
Early Travels(F) p.219 And De Laet, pp.87-88.

159. Padmavat, pp. 709-712, v.648-v.651.

If, a man had been bigamous- both the wives were expected to perform 'Sati' at the same pyre, alongwith their husband.¹⁶⁰ For other wives, a separate pyre was built- but they all committed 'Sati' alongwith the cremation of their dead husband.¹⁶¹

However, a reference is found when wives of Raja Dasrath were stopped by Bharat from performing this dreadful custom.¹⁶² Thus, it might have been successfully prevented in certain cases. But, the society, generally, looked down upon the widows who did not perform 'Sati'.¹⁶³ They were not allowed to grow their hair long or wear ornaments and good dresses.¹⁶⁴

The Mughal Emperors being enlightened and benevolent were aghast at this evil custom and tried to ban its practice. Akbar is said to have issued an order that a woman should not be forced to be a 'Sati'.¹⁶⁵ But, it could not be stopped altogether, during the Medieval period.¹⁶⁶

160. Ibid; Also, Mrigavati, p.336, v. 423.

161. Mrigavati, p.365, v.422; Pelsaert, pp.78-79; Storia, II, p.97. Also, Purchas, III, pp.49-50.

162. Manas, p.479, v.169.1; Pelsaert observed it during Jahangir's reign, p.80: "There are hundreds and even thousands who do not do it (Sati)", Bernier has put down similar observations, p.306.

163. R. Misra, p.133; Also Thevenot, p.84; And, Bernier, p. 314.

164. Rahim, p.12, v.118; Also, R. Misra, p.133; Withington, Early Travels, p.219; Storia, III, p.61. And Fitch, Early Travels, pp.20-22.

165. Badauni, II, p.388.

The ladies, committing 'Sati' carried 'Sindhora',¹⁶⁷ or the vermillion-box with them and, also, put on 'mahawar' 168 signs of bride-hood. These symbols were, also required to be obliterated alongwith the husband - whose existence was symbolised by their adornment!¹⁶⁹ However, the women committing 'Sati' removed all the adornments otherwise ;

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Kabir has questioned the very basis of this custom :

कबीर हों तोहि पूछै हे सखि , जीवत क्यूँ न मराइ ।

मूत्रं पीछे सत करे , जीवत क्यूँ न कराई ।।¹⁷¹

The inference is that, since, they had to commit 'Sati'- why should it not be committed before husbands' death. So that, they, too, may be given an opportunity to become a 'Sat'. Thus, he was airing the voice of protest against this pernicious custom - which to him, seems to be based on inequality and inequity.¹⁷²

167. Kabir, p.115, v.12; Also, p.219, v.128; And, Also Mrigavati, pp. 365-366, verses 422 & 423.

168. Kabir, p.119, v.34.

169. Kabir, p.115, v.12.

170. Kabir, pp.207-208, v.106; Padmavat, pp.709-712, verses 648-651. And, Also, Mrigavati, pp.365-366, verses 422 & 423.

171. Kabir, p.119, v. 38.

172. Ibid.

Jauhar :

More terrible than the 'Sati' was the custom of 'Jauhar'. If the enemy happened to be an alien and proved to be too strong, then this was the one and the only course left for the women-folk to follow.¹⁷³ Instead of the ladies being captured by the enemy and carried away to their 'harem', the desperate Rajputs Sometimes destroyed them themselves :

हठि चुरों लो जोहर होइ । पदूमिनि पाव हिरे मति सोई ।¹⁷⁴

At other times, the women would themselves jump into the fire-rather, than be taken away by the enemy. This custom, freed the Rajputs from all the worries and attachments. They would then put on saffron robes, open the gates of the fort, sally forth and die fighting to the last man.¹⁷⁵ The conquerors could only find heaps of ashes¹⁷⁶

जोहर भई इस्तिरी पुरुष भए संग्राम ।¹⁷⁷

Thus while women would commit 'Jauhar', men would die fighting, in the battle field.¹⁷⁸

173. A.P. Mathur, Thesis, A.U., p.88.

174. Padmavat, pp.570-571, v.532; Also, Nains's Khyat, I, p.55. Akbar Nama, II, p.472; Tod, I, pp.363 & 381 & Vol. II, pp.744-746.

175. Padmavat, p.573, v.535; K.M. Ashraf, p.193; Babarnama, p.312.

176. Ibid; Also, Akbarnama, II, p.472.

177. Padmavat, p.612, v.651.

178. Ibid, Aso Ibn Batuta, O.I.B, p.95.

The Ladies of the Professional Classes :

Or

The Women-folk of the Occupational Castes :

In the Padmavat, we have reference to the women-folk of the Kayastha caste, mentioned as 'Kaithini' or 'Kayasthini'.¹⁷⁹ According to Jayasis, description, however, it seems, that they had acquired a high status in the social stratification, as they are mentioned to be moving along with a Princess.¹⁸⁰

Similarly, Jayasi has mentioned, the women-folk of the 'Sunar' or Goldsmith caste, known as 'Sonari' - they too, had gained in Social status.¹⁸¹

However, we come across the women - folk of certain occupational castes or professional groups, who, themselves, became adept in the art or skills associated with their professions. The most outstanding example being that of the

179. Padmavat, p.177, v. 185; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.29, v.9.

180. Ibid (Only Padmavat).

181. Padmavat, p.177, v.185; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.30, v.15.

Milk-woman or Gwalin.¹⁸² They not only milked the cows,¹⁸³ but made curd¹⁸⁴, butter¹⁸⁵ and ghee¹⁸⁶ out of it. They also acted as vendors and sold the milk and these milk - products carrying it in the earthen-ware vessels on their heads and going to, as far as the nearest towns and cities from the their villages.¹⁸⁷ In the daytime, their men-folk went to the outskirts of the villages for grazing their cattle and it was left for them, to prepare and carry their lunches to where they were looking after the cattle.¹⁸⁸

It seems that apart from the washer-men washing the clothes,¹⁸⁹ the washerwomen, too did the job and helped their husbands not only in washing the clothes,¹⁹⁰ but, also, returned these washed clothes to the houses of their patrons or customers.¹⁹¹

Similarly, the women-folk of the 'Nai'¹⁹² Caste also worked in the houses of their patron - customers. They applied oil and other such jobs - served the ladies and earned

182. Sur Sagar, I, p.56, v.172, p.78, v.242, p.79, v.245 etc; Also, Padmavat, pp.130-131, v.135.

183. Ibid.

184. Ibid, p.365, v.931, Also Padmavat (ref.4 above).

185. Ibid.

186. Ibid, Also, pp.349-350, v.883; p.356, v.903 etc.

187. Sur Sagar, I, p. 365, v.931; Also, Padmavat, pp.130-131, v.135.

188. Sur Sagar, I, p.422, v.1093.

189. Kabir Granthawali, p.50, v.11; Also, Mrigavati, p.367, v.424.

190. Padmavat, pp.130-131, v.135; Also, p.449, v. 438.

191. Rahiman vilas, p.39, v.137.

192. Kabir Granthawali, p.375, v.11, Sur Sagar, I, p.321, v.798; and Arthkatha, p.3.

separately. They, thus, applied 'Chandan' or 'Mahawar',¹⁹³ on the bodies and feet of the ladies, respectively on certain special occasion, like child-birth, marriages, and other important social functions. For all these work on such important occasions, they received a separate payment as reward which was called 'Neg',¹⁹⁴ and it was customary.¹⁹⁵ Aligned to the 'Nain',¹⁹⁶ or the barber-woman, was the 'Barin',¹⁹⁷ she also worked in the houses of their patrons.¹⁹⁸

Similar was the professional group of 'Koris',¹⁹⁹ whose women - folk also seemed to work - both industriously and skilfully.²⁰⁰ Since both the spouses worked, they were able to live a better life. In spite of being lower down in the social order,²⁰¹ they wore rich silken clothes and, at times, gave company to a Rajput princess,²⁰² on some occasions.

193. Sur Sagar, I, pp.274-275, v. 658.

194. Ibid.

195. It is a custom still in parts of North India to give them 'Neg' on child-births, marriages and all such occasion.

196. Sur Sagar, I, pp.274-275, v.658.

197. Padmavat, p.177, v. 185.

198. Ibid.

199. Kabir Granthawali, p.148, v.10; Also, Padmavat, p.177, v.185.

200. Rahiman vilas, p.36, verses 98 and 99.

201. Ibid.

202. Padmavat, p.177, v. 185.

The women- folk of 'Telis' or Oilmen, or the 'Telin'²⁰³ too, like those of the other professional castes, were industrious and worked shoulder to shoulder with their husbands. They produced, as well as, sold oils- by extracting it from mustard (edible)²⁰⁴ as, well as, from flowers etc. for the use in toilet and cosmetics.²⁰⁵

Similarly, the women-folk of the 'Chamars', that is, the 'Chamaris' or the 'Chamarins'²⁰⁶ also helped and co-operated with their men-folk-thay, thus, manufactured and coloured the shoes and chappals.²⁰⁷

As menial servants, we have the reference of Dasi,²⁰⁸ as well as, 'Londae',²⁰⁹ who did all sorts of work in the house hold. Apart from them, we also have a reference of 'Bazdarin',²¹⁰ who was also skilled in training the hunter- birds or 'Baz' or Falcon²¹¹. Thus, their caste name developed due to their association with the hunter- bird called the 'Baz'. We also find a reference to the 'GadiBarin',²¹² that is, the woman cart-drivers.

203. Rahiman vilas, p.32, v.41.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid.

206. Rahiman vilas, p.39, v. 139.

207. Ibid.

208. Manas, p.299, v.325.2, Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.79, v.244.

209. 84 Vaishnavon, pp. 36-37.

210. Rahiman vilas, p.37, v.112.

211. Ain; pp.304-307.

212. Rahiman vilas, p.39, v.128.

They were, generally - (especially those of the lowest castes) employed for other works like scavenging and cleaning. Without these 'Choocharis',²¹³ or sweeperess, every place would have presented a very dirty and dusty look. They must have been employed by people, in general, as well as, by the state. Similarly, we find the reference to 'Domini',²¹⁴ who also did almost the same work of scavenging and removing the carcasses of the dead- animals etc.

Water is a daily necessity in every man's life and his household.²¹⁵ This requirement was met by employment of female water-carriers also. These were known as either 'Sakkin' or 'Paniharin',²¹⁶.

Those women, who were employed or those who worked to plaster the walls or the floors of the houses with cow-dung or mud, were known as 'Thopin',²¹⁷

213. Rahiman vilas, p.40, v. 141.

214. Rahiman vilas, p.34, v. 67.

215. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v.55.

216. Rahiman vilas, p.30, verses 21 and 22.

217. Rahiman vilas, p.36, v.92; Also Padmavat, pp.355-356, v.356.

The women-folk of the 'Tambol' caste²¹⁸ were known as 'Tambolin' or 'Tamolini'.²¹⁹ That they, too, helped their men-folk in the betel-trade is evident in the references to them in the sixteenth century, Hindi literature.²²⁰

Similarly, those dealing with the perfumes and perfumery were known as Gandhin.²²¹

We also get reference of women, wood-cutters or wood-fellers, known as 'Lakadharin' or 'Kathihari'.²²² Those who were engaged in the profession of grass-selling were known as Ghasin.²²³ Still others grew vegetables and were known as 'Kachchin'.²²⁴ And, those who sold these vegetables were referred to, as 'Kunjari' or 'Konjari'.²²⁵ These were still others, who cooked and prepared certain edibles and food-stuffs, carrying them on a big plate or 'Thaal'. They were known as 'Tabakhini'.²²⁶

Similarly, in the cloth industry, we have a reference of calico-dyers or 'Rangrejini'.²²⁷

218. Those dealing with 'Tambool' or betel-that is, betel-waker.

219. Rahiman vilas, p.30, v.13.

220. Rahiman vilas, p.30 v.13; Also, p.125.

221. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v.57; Also, Ardhakatha, p.3.

222. Ibid, p.38, v.122.

223. Ibid, p.4, v.30.

224. Ibid, p.31, verses 35 and 36.

225. Ibid, p.30, verses 23 and 24.

226. Ibid, p.32, v.39.

227. Ibid, p.30, v.19.

We have evidences of a very interesting aspect of women-folk of the occupational castes. We have, so far, seen that they, generally, work along with their husbands- their own contribution- in the profession of their castes and families being no less. The most striking case, however, is of the women-folk of the Kabwar caste.²²⁸ While, their men-folk are busy preparing and distilling liquor, it is, generally, rather, totally, left for their women-folk to sell it because, whenever, we have a reference of a liquor-shop, where the people go to drink, we, inevitably, have a reference of 'kalali',²²⁹ or 'kalwari',²³⁰ as selling and serving liquor.

Equally interesting is the case of the women inn-keepers or 'Bhatiyarins'.²³¹ They provided food etc. to the travellers, who rested for the night in their serais,²³² while, travelling from one place to another.

Apart from the women- folk of the professional groups or occupational castes, mentioned above, we have

228. Padmavat, p.177, v.185; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.31, v.31.

229. Kabir Granthawali, p.32, v.2; Also, p.234, v.3.

230. Padmavat, p.177, v.185; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.31, v.31 and p.125.

231. Rahiman vilas, p.32, v.45 and v.46.

232. For serais see Akbarnama (Beveridge), III, p.381.

we have references of yet another professional class, where the women's contribution was no less. And, this was the caste of gardener or 'Malee'.²³³ Their women folk not only helped their husbands or men-folk in the work of gardening but, also acted as shoop-keepers selling flowers etc. grown in their gardens, at the market-place :

से लै बैठ फूल फूलहारी -- -- -- -- 234

They also prepared 'Mor' worm by men as bride-grooms.²³⁵ On marriages and other functions, they also made 'Toran',²³⁶ and decorated them on gates, windows, doors of the houses where these celebrations were held.²³⁷

The women had taken to one more profession in a natural way and that was, acrobatics and jugglery.

233. Mrigavati, p.167, v.201, p.168, v.202; Also Ardhkatha, p.3.
234. Padmavat, p.39, v.39.

235. Padmavat, p.130, v.135.

236. Sur Sagar, I, pp.274-275, v.40

237. Ibid.

Jayasi calls the women-folk of this profession 'Bedini'²³⁸ and describes the various tricks that they performed skilfully and with lightening speed.²³⁹ One of the tricks performed with ease was climbing up on the head and shoulders of others²⁴⁰ and forming pyramids. In order to entertain the people and earn their living, they danced and made various postures, as per the musical rhythms, wearing various masks and dresses.²⁴¹ They would easily flex their bodies and climb up to ropes and bamboo-poles etc.²⁴² They have also been referred to as 'Bajigarin',²⁴³ and 'Nati'.²⁴⁴

The Prostitutes : Vaishyas or Ganikas :

That this so-called oldest profession on the earth was existent in the Medieval Indian society is no surprise. In the sixteenth century North India, the

238. Padmavat, p.109, f.n.7.

239. Padmavat, pp.108-109, v.112.

240. Sur Sagar, I, p.31, v.98.

241. Sur Sagar, I, pp.67-68, v.205; Also, Rahiman vilas, p.35, v.76.

242. Rahiman vilas, p.11, v.101; Also, p.34, v.71.

243. Rahiman vilas, p.38, v.118.

244. Sur-Sagar, I, p.16, v.45.

prostitutes were called 'Baisa' or 'Vaishya', as they are referred to, even today :

----- । कह सिंगार तहँ बेठी बैसा ²⁴⁵ ।

They were also known as Ganika²⁴⁶ as referred to, by the other sixteenth century, bhakti poets.

That, they lived in a seperate locality in the towns and cities is evident from Jayasi's description :

मुनि सिंगार हाट धनि देसा । कह सिंगार तहँ बेठी बैसा ²⁴⁷ ।

Thus, Jayasi calls their locality as the 'Shringar Hat' or the Market of Cosmetics (or Sensuosity).

Jayasi goes on to give a graphic description of their apparel etc., while, they prepared themselves for the search of prospective customers :

मुड़ तबोर तन चीर कुसँभी । कानन्ह कनक जराउ सुँभी ²⁴⁸ ।

245. Padmavat, p.38, v.38; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.94-96, v.290.

246. Kabir Granthawali; pp.325-326, v.2; Also Sur Sagar, I, pp.8-9, v. 25; pp.9-10, v.27 and 28.

247. Padmavat, p.38, v. 38.

248. Padmavat, p. 38, v. 38.

Thus, they used to chew betels, wear expensive clothes and, also, ornaments like the golden ear-rings etc.

That, they were adept in the musical skills,²⁴⁹ is also evident. It was through the playing of musical instruments that, they not only drew the men's attention but kept them glued to themselves.²⁵⁰ However, the man's wealth was the main attraction for the prostitutes. But as soon as they drained his wealth, they would have just no truck with any man. They would not even recognize him:

घेटक लाइ हरहि मन जो तहि गय हे फेट ।
सांठि नाठि उठि अर बराउ ना पहिचान न भेट ॥²⁵¹

That all sections of the society came to visit them is evident from the perusal of a verse in Sur Sagar.

In this verse Surdas refers to a Brahman Ajamil, who had started living with a prostitute :

द्विज - कुल - पतित अजामिल विषयी, गनिका हाथ बिकायो ।²⁵²

249. Padmavat, p.38, verse 38; And,

Also, Rahimn vilas, p.35, verses 82 and 83.

250. Ibid.

251. Ibid.

252. Sur Sagar, I, pp.33-34, v.104.

That, they hardly followed the traditional life of an average Indian woman is evident from the literature of the sixteenth century India. They never keep fast or led a restrained life.²⁵³

The general opinion, about the prostitutes was that they were crooked or 'Kutil', wicked or 'Kucheeel' and not worth looking at.²⁵⁴ They were deemed to have sunk very low and had fallen from grace or were 'patit'.²⁵⁵ They had a malicious mind or 'Dusht-Mati'.²⁵⁶

In, at least, one way they were like our own ordinary women-folk. They also kept pets like parrots²⁵⁷ etc. - loved them and cared for them.

However, the Bhakti poets of the sixteenth century India, were willing to provide the solace and shelter of 'Bhakti' to them. It was, in fact, the vehicle for salvation for all-even to the lowly-born, as well as,

253. Sur Sagar, I, p.40, v.122.

254. Ibid; pp. 41-42, v. 125.

255. Ibid; p.44, v. 132.

256. Ibid; p.52, v. 158.

257. Ibid; p.22,v.67; Also,p.29,v.89.

those fallen low due to their own misdeeds and evil acts:

भजन की परताप ऐसी, तिरें जल पाषाण ।

अधम भील अजाति गनिका, बढ़े जात बिमान।²⁵⁸

Surdar has also referred to the children of the prostitutes. According to him, since they were not born out of wedlock- whose son can they be called ?²⁵⁹ The social status, in the Medieval Indian Society was, in fact, always determined by the father - who was treated as the head of the family or 'kul' :

गनिका -सुत सोभा नहीं पावत, जाके कुल कोऊ न पिता री ।²⁶⁰

Thus, the children of the prostitutes were not accepted in the Medieval Indian Society and, so, were always looked down upon.

Apart from the prostitutes, there was also a section of our women-folk, who were professional singers and dancers, for the amusement of people. These were known

258. Kabir Granthawali, pp.325-326, v.2; Also Sur Sagar, I, I, p.76, v. 235.

259 . Sur Sagar, I, p.117, v.352.

260 . Ibid; p.12, v. 34.

as 'Cheri',²⁶¹ 'Kanchini',²⁶² and 'Paturi',²⁶³ The term 'Paturi' was more prevalent, as their art of attracting the customer was known as the 'art of Patur',²⁶⁴

The women Messengers :

The women messengers were used regularly, in Medieval India and were known as 'Dooti' :

दूती दर्शयाम पठाई ।²⁶⁵

It is evident that, they were employed to convey special and urgent messages,²⁶⁶ as well as, to act as spies, That is, to get precious informations for their masters.²⁶⁷ It seems that they were both loyal and intelligent, rather, shrewd at analysis²⁶⁸ this must have been an essential qualification for them, while gaining employment.

They were also referred to, as 'Dutika',²⁶⁹ and 'Dhamini',²⁷⁰

261. Rahiman vilas, p.121, v.69.

262. Ibid; v. 75.

263. Ibid; p.35, v.81.

264. Ibid.

265. Sur Sagar, II, p.162, v.3184 & v.3185 ; Also, p.163, v.3187.

266. Ibid.

267. Sur Sagar, II, p.162, v. 3183.

268. Sur Sagar, II, p.163, v.3187.

269. Ibid.

270. Padmavat, pp.83-84, v.85.

The Status of women-Slave And Tribal Women :

It appears, thus, that, the women were generally a condemned lot in the Medieval India but, it was more so, in the case of a 'Dasi' or women-slave or the domestic maid- servant :

काने खीरे कुबरे कुटिल कुवाली जानि ।
तिथ बिसेषि पुनि बेरी - - - - -²⁷¹

She must serve her masters well and do all the daily chores- should never dream of benefic or happy events.²⁷² They were just destined to lead a life of submission and in general of depravation.²⁷³

The slave-girls or women were also, sometimes, kept as mistresses by their masters :

कुलवर्ति निकारहि मारि सती । गृह आनहि बेरी निबेरि गती ॥²⁷⁴

Thus, it is evident that, at times, their sexual exploitation by their masters, was also not ruled out in Medieval India.

271. Manas, p. 345, v. 14.

272. Manas, p. 640, verses 16.7 and 16.8

273. Ibid.

274. Manas, p. 1015, v. 100.2.

Similarly, the tribal women were considered to be the most uncivilized of all the persons²⁷⁵ out to destroy the wonders of civilization²⁷⁶, just as the 'Baz' or hawk (false-on) destroyed the smaller birds.²⁷⁷ They, thus, were considered to be agents of de-civilization.

They were considered as hard-hearted as some stone - insects.²⁷⁸ They never felt unhappy even in the forests.²⁷⁹ Moreover, they were totally ignorant of the luxuries and comforts of a civilized life.²⁸⁰

The Inlaws :

An important aspect of the personality of women could be studied, by going through their relations with the in-laws, or, their behaviour in the house of the husbands and his parents.

275. Manas, p.551, v. 250.2.

276. Manas, p.357, v. 28.

277. Ibid.

278. Manas, p. 384, v. 59.1.

279. Ibid; Also, p.551, v. 250.2

280. Ibid; Also, p.550, v.249.

They were expected to be respectful to their father-in-law and mothers-in-law and were, also, to be appreciated by their brothers-in-law :

-----, सासू ससुरा माँ !
देवर बैठ सबनि की प्यारी, पिय को मरम न जानै ।²⁸¹

The general impression about the in-laws' house was never good. And, newly-married brides often felt scared in changed circumstances. Thus, the head of the family of the in-laws—who, generally, were the brides fathers-in-law—whose commands were to be followed—were considered to be hard-hearted.²⁸²

However, we have reference of a very doting and affectionate father-in-law, who instructed his wives to take maternal care of the new brides:

----- । राखेहु नयन पलक की नाई²⁸³

281. Kabir, p.282, v.27.

282. Padmavat, pp.60-61, v.60.

283. Manas, p.325, v. 354.4.

In general they treated their daughters-in-law well and affectionately. They permitted the latter to even go to their father's house, whenever, they desired.²⁸⁴

But, their relationships with their mother-in-law, as well as, sisters-in-law, were, generally, not very cordial. The mothers-in-law or 'Sas' and sisters-in-law or 'Nanad' are generally, painted very black in the contemporary literature.

Thus, we have a reference of a bride frightened of her mother-in-law when her necklace is lost :

मेरी हार हिरानों में लपट ।

सास दुराचनि पीव डराउ ॥²⁸⁵

They were considered to be hard-hearted and short - tempered in their dealings with their daughters-in-law.²⁸⁶

284. Manas, pp. 402-403, verses 80.3; 80.4; 81, 81.1; 81.2 & 81.3.

285. Kabir Granthawali, pp. 369-370, v.2.

286. Kabir, pp. 369-370, v.2.

Both the 'Sas' and 'Nand' would combine against the new woman in the house and criticize her continuously :
 सास ननद बोलिन्ह जित लेही । - - - - - 287

or, they would not permit her the leisure for amusement :
 निसु दिन सास ननदिया , मुहि घर हेर ।
 सुनन न देत सुरतिया , मधुरी ढेर । 288

Rather, they would always create troubles for her and, even tried to get things done- undone :

बाहिर ले के दियवा , बारन जाय ।
 सासु ननद ठिग पहुँचत, देत बुझाय । 289

They would find occasion to leave her alone in the house to do the house-hold jobs and enjoyed lives themselves :
 नेवते गहत ननदिया , मैके सासु । 290

287. Padmavat, pp.60-61, v.60

288. Rahim, p.43, v.16

289. Ibid; p.24.

290. Ibid, p.45, v.38.

Sometimes, the wives of the elder sons also joined their sisters-in-law in harassing the new bride :

येहि लागि कीन विरोधवा , ननद पिठानि ।
रहिउं न लाइ करेववा , तेहि हित जानि ॥²⁹¹

Thus, the new brides had to face a hostile atmosphere, probably, to brow-beat them into servility. However, in order to maintain the social order and cohesiveness of the family, the daughters-in-law were still expected to ²⁹²win over their mothers-in-law, by serving them well.

291. Rahim, p.48,v.58.

292. Manas, p.582, v.286.4.; Also, p.943,v.23.4.

CHAPTER V

Dress, Cosmetics And Ornaments:

Indian dress has been a product of the soil - eminently suited to the climate and conditions of life in the country. But, the foreign influence was also an important factor in the evolution of the dress in India.¹ Aesthetic considerations, as well as, climatic requirements of the different parts of the country and the different seasons of the year were also responsible for determining the clothing in the medieval age,² as much as, they influence it in our age.

The Dress of A Child :

The Children, generally, wore a loose frock-like apparel, which has been referred to, as 'Jhaguliya' in the Hindi literature of the sixteenth century :

पीत झगुलिया तनु पहिराई । - - - - - 3

1. P.N. Chopra, 'Society and Culture', p.1.

2. Ibid.

3. Manas, p.189, v. 198.6.

However, Surdas calls it 'Jhanguli' :

तन सेंगुली, सिर लाल चौतनी, घूरा हुँ कर - पाइ ।⁴

Apart from 'Jhanguli', he also calls it 'Jhinguli'⁵
and 'Jhanguriya'.⁶

That, the frock generally worn was of the yellow
colour is also evident.⁷

A piece of cloth like the 'dupatta' was often used
by the children, which they tied around their waist :

कटितट पटपीत, तून सायक अनियारे ।।⁸

It was also used to cover the upper portion of the body
sometimes :

- - - - - , पीरे पट ओढ़े चले

चारु चालु ।⁹

4. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 291-292, v. 707; Also, Geetawali, p.71, v.31.

5. Ibid, p. 306, v. 731.

6. Ibid, p. 305, v. 750.

7. Manas, p. 189, v. 198.6, Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.305, v.750.
Geetawali, pp.72-73, v. 32; p.74, v.33.

8. Geetawali, p.82, v. 39; Also, p.84, v. 41.

9. Geetawali, p.85, v.42.

The children also wore a cap on their heads and this was known as 'Chautani'¹⁰, or 'Topi' or 'Típaro' also :

सिरसि टिपारो लाल , - - - - - ॥

The head- cap has also been referred to as 'Paga' or 'Pagiya' ;

सुंदर बदन, सिर पगिया जरकसी ॥¹²

We also have reference of 'Kulahi' or another variety of cap being used :

सिर कुलही, पग पहिरि पैजनी, जहाँ जाहु जहँ नंद बाबा रे ।¹³

However, the cap used to be worn by children, when they used to get ready for occasions or go out of the houses. Otherwise, we find them with their hairs tied in a single 'choti'¹⁴ or, they just kept their hairs combed¹⁵ simply.

While going out, they also wore shoes :

ललित पनही पाँप पैजनी - किंकिनि - छुनि!¹⁶

10. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 291-292, v.707; p.293, v.712; And, p.305, v.750 etc.

11. Geetawali, p.86, v. 43.

12. Geetawali, p.87, v.44.

13. Sur Sagar, I, p.315, v.778; And, Geetawali, p.71, v.31.

14. Sur Sagar, pp.319-320, v.793.

15. Geetawali, pp.97-98, v.54; Also, p.74, v.33.

Kavitawali, p.9, v.5.

16. Geetawali, p.86, v.43; p.87, v.44.

In the house, itself, they would have remained without them, as we have no reference of the children wearing them, while moving or playing inside the house.

The Dress of the Men :

The men generally wore nothing above the waist. However, they wore a type of loose 'kurta' or shirt, while going out and, this was called 'Angarkha'.¹⁷

The 'Angarkha' was also known as Baga¹⁸

कहिसि अन्हारु फिरावहु बाग । - - - - -¹⁹

However, Kabirdas and Jayasi refer to it, as chol or Cholina.²⁰

'Dagla' was also a type of loose shirt or kurta worn by the men²¹ in Medieval India : The princes and the men of the wealthier sections, wore these clothes of a rich variety with precious stones studded in them :
रतनसेनि कहें कापर आए । हीरा मोति पदारथ लाए ।²²

Of the other clothes by which the men just covered the upper part of the body we have references

17. Geetawali, p.125, v.74.

18. Mrigavati, p.192, f.n. 4.

19. Ibid; v. 227; Also, Padmavat, p.339, v.1.

20. Kabir, pp.313-314, v.20; Also, 'Aakhri Kalam' Jayasi, Granthawali, pp.358-359, v.54.

21. Akhravat, Jayasi Granthawali, p.319, v.22; Padmavat, p.262, v.276; pp.339-340, v.340, And, Aakhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.358-359, v.54.

22. Padmavat, p.262, v.276.

of special type of cloth known as Pitambar²³ and 'Nilambar'²⁴, being of golden and blue colours respectively.

Of the expensive clothes, worn by the princes, as well as, the wealthier section of the society, we have a reference of 'Patambar' :

पाटंबर - अंबर तपि , गूदरि पहिराउँ²⁵

That it was expensive or costly is self-evident :

आभूषण बहुमोल पटंबर, पहिरौ मातु बनाइ²⁶

Thus, it was always worn during marriages and other important occasions :

हय गय - रतन - हेम-पाटंबर, आनंद मंगलघारा²⁷

It may be inferred that this variety of cloth was not only worn seldom, but, treated, as an adornment-like any other ornament :

एकनि को भूषण पाटंबर - - - - -²⁸

23. Sur Sagar, I, p.431, v.1111; pp.452-453, v.1181; p.455, v.1190; p.651, v.1755 etc.

24. Sur Sagar, I, p.438, v.1129; p.528, v.1402; p.651, v.1755 etc.

25. Sur Sagar, I, pp.54-55, v.66; Also, p.111, v.336.

26. Ibid, p.247, v.605; p.529, v.1402; p.785, v.2133; And, pp.815-820, v.2236.

27. Ibid, pp.256-259, v.622.

28. Ibid, p.267, v.643.

The men also wore a 'dhoti' or a single sheet of long cloth below the waist-was a sufficient and respectable dress :

यह कहि नंद गए जसुना-तट । लै धोती झारी बिधि कर्मट ।³⁰

Surdas, describes how Nand was finally, declared untracable - as he could not be found- but, the clothe he wore was found on the river-bank :

जहँ-तहँ दूदि खाल घर आए । धोती अरु झारी वै ल्यार ।।³¹

Thus, we can say that 'dhoti' was worn by men below their waists.³² In summers, all the men generally, and even in other seasons, the lower classes, had to content only with a cotton 'langota'.³³

We also have a reference of a rug or 'Kamri', used during the winters³⁴ especially, to guard from cold :

तुम कमरी के ओढ़न हारे, पाटम्बर नहिं छाजत ।

सूर - स्वामि कारे , तन ऊपर, कारी कामरि भ्राजत ।।³⁵

29. K.M. Ashraf, pp. 212-213; Varthema, p.109;Barbosa,I,113-114.

30. Sur Sagar, I, p.599-601, v.1602.

31. Ibid.

32. Refer 2 & 3 above; Also, Manas, p.301, v.326.2; Meera Sudha- Sindhu, p.875, v.20, Nanak -Vani, p.344, Vani 28, Bani Niketan, pp.25 and 59; Also, Aspects of Bengali Society, p.44; And, Tabkat-i-Akbari, II, p.100.

33. Macauliffe, I, p.162; Babarnama (Beveridge), p.519; Ain, III, p.274; Caemoes, Early Travels (Foster), p.17.

34. Rahim, p.5, v.40; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.785, v.2134.

35. Sur Sagar, I, p.786, v.2135.

It was used both while awake and on the move, as well as, a rug while sleeping :

धनि धनि यह कामरी मोहन स्वाम की
यह आदि जात बन यह सेज की बसन , - - - - -³⁶

Sometimes a light wrapper was thrown over the shoulders, hanging over the back and this was known as 'Pichhora' or 'Pichhori' :

कटि-तट पीत पिछौरो बाँधे, काक्यच्छ धरे सीस ।³⁷

A loose piece of cloth also used was the 'Dupatta',³⁸ it entwined the shoulders, both its ends hanging down. Or, sometimes, it was tied around the waist.³⁹ It was also called 'Uttariya',⁴⁰ or 'Uparna',⁴¹

Men also wore caps on their heads known as 'Chautani',⁴² They were also sometimes beautifully embroidered.⁴³

36. Sur Sagar, I, p. 785, v. 2134.

37. Sur Sagar, p. 193, v. 464.

38. Manas, p. 207, v. 218.1.

39. Ibid.

40. Manas, p. 302, v. 326.4. Also, Kavitta Ratnakar, p. 39, v. 92.

41. Manas, p. 302, v. 326.4.

42. Manas, p. 227, v. 242.4; Also, Geetawali, p. 125, v. 74; Sur Sagar, I, p. 305, v. 750 etc. And, De Laet, pp. 80-81.

43. Ibid.

A type of hat, known as 'kulah' was also worn :

ताज कुलह सिर मुहम्मद सोहे । - - - - - 44

Surdas refers to the same hat and calls it 'Kulahi'.⁴⁵
Sometime, instead of a cap or a hat, a turban was also tied over the head and this was known as 'Paga' :

दीन्हेंसि सिर जो सँवारे पागा । - - - - - 46

We have, however, failed to find a reference to stockings or socks being used by the men in the sixteenth century India. The heat may have been an important factor,⁴⁷ or the length of their breeches did not necessitate it.⁴⁸ Thus, they generally, wore 'Chappals' instead.⁴⁹

We do have a reference to foot-wear or shoes ,
known as 'Paiiri' :

पाँवरि तजहु देहु पग पैरी -- - - - - 50

44. Aakhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.358-359, v.54;
Also, Ain, I, pp. 88-89. And, Mandelslo, p.63;Therenot,
III, p.36 & Ovington, p.314.

45. Sur Sagar, I, p.315, v. 778.

46. Aakhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, p.339, v.1, Meera Sudha
Sindhu, p.602, v.78 Also, Pyard, II, p.137; Mandelslo,
p.53; Therenot, p.37.

47. Nicolo Conti, p.22; Bernier, p.240.

48. Ovington, p.315.

49. Nicolo Conti, p.22.

50. Padmavat, p.262, v. 276.

It seems that they always wore either shoes or sandals or chappals - at least, those of the richer sections of the Society, because any deviance from the usual practice is mentioned in the contemporary literature :

राम लखन सिय बिनु पग पनहीं । - - - - - 51

Thus 'Panhāen' must have been some sort of shoes or sandals.⁵² Syrdas calls it 'Pad-Tran' or simply footwear which was, it seems, always worn :

- - - - - , बिन पद - त्रान जतें दोउ भूत ।⁵³

In Rajputana, the leather shoes were known as 'Phoolariya' ⁵⁴

The above mentioned foot-wear must have been of leather, because those made of the wood have been separately mentioned and, were known as 'Khadann' or 'Parwari' ;

पावनह पहिरि तेहु सब पँवरी । - - - - - 55

51. Manas, p.515, v.210.4.

52. Ibid.

53. Sur Sagar, I, p.198, v.482.

54. Meera Mandakini, p.39, v.87.

55. Padmavat, p.132, v.137; Also, Kavitta Ratnakar, p.1, v.2.

And, Jayasi refers to a situation, where a prince, disguised as an ascetic is being asked to throw off the mask and resume his form. He is, thus, asked to remove the wooden foot-wear and wear the leather shoes instead :

पाविरि तजहु देहु पाग पैरी - - - - - 56

Thus, a-part from being used at home,⁵⁷ these wooden sandals were, thus generally used by the ascetics.⁵⁸

Dress of the Women :

The reign of Akbar is significant with regard to the evolution of women's costume. This process was given impetus by the entrance of Rajput princesses in his harem.⁵⁹ And, since, his liberalism permitted them to wear their own dresses - it brought forth a marked change in the fashion and style⁶⁰ of the sixteenth century.

56. Padmavat, p. 262, v. 276.

57. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.118.

58. Macauliffe, I, pp. 30-31, 94, 102, & 162; Also, Padmavat, p.262, v.276.

59. R. Misra, p.121

60. Ibid.

The ladies of the Medieval period, however, had not many varieties of dresses.⁶¹ The Hindu women, generally, wore a 'Sari', that is, a piece of cloth wrapped round the middle part of the body and thrown over the head.⁶²

सोह नवत तनु संदर सारी । जगत जननि अतुलित छवि भारी ॥⁶³

Surdas mentions it separately, while describing the apparels in vogue in Medieval India :

नीलावर, पाटवर, सारी, सेत पीत चुनरी, अल्लाए ।⁶⁴

Or

प्यारी की सारी आपनु ते, पीतावर राधा उर लाई ॥⁶⁵

61. Tod, II, pp.58-59; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.6.

62. Rasik Priya, p.20, Savvaiya, 19; Bihari Ratnakar, p.81, v.189; Babarnama, III, p.519; & Travernier, II, p.125; Also, Ghurye, Indian Costumes, p.16;

63. Manas, p.231, v.247.1; Sur Sagar, I, pp.503-504, v.1313 & p.507, v. 1322.

64. Sur Sagar, I, p.529, v.1402; Also, Bihari Satsai, p.106, v.607.

65. Sur Sagar, I, p.503, v.1310; Also, v.1311. And, Mrigavati, pp.203-204, verses, 239 and 240 (For Sari);

The Saris were of different varieties. The women of the well-to-do classes wore coloured or colourful 'Saris' -especially during marriages and other such occasions :

पँचरंग सारी भेंगाइ, बधू जननि पहराइ, - - - - -⁶⁶

The women of the higher classes wore the 'Saris' of thin and fine stuffs, generally silk and, these were known as 'Patora' or 'Patori' :

पट्टमावति नइ पहिरि पटोरी । - - - - -⁶⁷

And, these, too, seem to have been worn on occasions, when the women dressed-up for functions, celebrations etc :

केहिक सिंगार को पहिर पटोरा । गिये नहिं हार रही होइ डोरा⁶⁸

The 'Saris' were, generally, decorated with numerous attractive prints or designs.⁶⁹

66. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 293-294, v.713; Meera Madhuri, v.61;

Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.619-620, v.1661-----

And, Also, Padmavat, p.327, v.329.

67. Padmavat, p.709, v.648; Also, p.177, v.185;

68. Ibid, p.350, v.351.

69. Bihari Ratnakar, p.80, v.188; Padmavat, p.327, v.329.

We also have references of Saris made of very rich cloth. These included, the 'Makari ka Tar',⁷⁰ 'Samudra Lahri',⁷¹ 'Ratan Pati',⁷² 'Tansukh',⁷³ and the cotton 'Doriya',⁷⁴ sometimes, its border was golden⁷⁵ and, sometimes, the whole 'Sari' was worked in gold.⁷⁶

Moreover, we have references to a special type of cloth, which has been referred to, as 'Chandan Cheer',⁷⁷ or 'Chandanotta',⁷⁸ Still others constituted 'Kheerodak',⁷⁹, 'Banspor',⁸⁰ which was a variety of fine 'Tanjeb', 'Jhilmil',⁸¹ or the finest of the muslins, 'Chikwa',⁸² or a variety of the silken cloth, 'Meghanna',⁸³. A special expensive cloth was prepared in the region of the erstwhile, Bidar state and, thus, it was popular in the Medieval India as Bidari.⁸⁴

70. Padmavat, p.504, v. 485.

71. Ibid, p.113, v.117.

72. Ibid.

73. Sur Sagar, p.304, Kavitt Ratnakar, p.47, v.49.

74. Padmavat, p.327, v.329.

75. Bihari Satsai, p.304.

76. Ram Chandrika, p.155, v.12.

77. Padmavat, pp.287-288, v.296: ---

Also, p.290, v.299; p.325, v.327-Both references are for 'Chandan chola'

78. Ibid, pp.327-328, v.329; see, Also verses 335 and 354, p.391, v.385.

79. Ibid; p.391, v.385; Also, Harsh Charit, p.208, v.7; And, Varn Ratnakar, p.21.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid

83. Ibid; Also Varn Ratnakar, p.21.

84. Ibid.

Similarly, we get a reference of 'Surang Cheer', a cloth said to be prepared in Masulipattam, the capital port of the then Kaling kingdom.⁸⁵ Moreover, another type of fine cloth, most probably, of the silken variety was the 'Net Anhar'.⁸⁶ A cloth was especially made for the princes and wealthier section of the society and, this has been referred to as 'Kanakpatra' made with golden trappings glazed to it.⁸⁷

That a long piece of cloth or 'chadar' - may also have been used as a 'Sari' cannot be ruled out.⁸⁸ It was worn by the women, just as men wore 'Dagal' or Kurta ;
सोर सुषेती महे दिन राती । दगल चीर पहिरहि बहु भाँती ।⁸⁹

These 'Cheers' were also sometimes of the expensive muslin cloth,⁹⁰ or of the silken cloth.⁹¹ But, the 'Cheer'

85. VRp.21Also, f.n.5. (VR for Varn Ratnakar).

86. Ibid, p.335, v. 336; p.336,f.n.5; And, Also, Varn Ratnakar, p.22.

87. Ibid,p.414,v.409;p.415,f.n.4; Also Varn Ratnakar,p.21.

88. Refer, K.M. Ashraf,p.213; Also, S.M. Jaffar,p.175;A. Rashid, p.54.) (Also,Ram Chandrika,p.204,v.18;Bihari Satsai, p.712; Kavi Priya,p.150,v.66.)

89. Padmavat,pp.339-340, v.340; Also, Sur Sagar,I,p.603, v.1607; Also,p.267,verses 643 & 644 & pp.529-530,v.1403; p.530,v.1404 Etc; And Mrigavati, p.37,v.46;p.59,v.77; p.61,v.79;p.64,v.83;p.65,v.84 Etc.

90. Sur Sagar, I,p.530,v.1404;p.785,v.2133 & pp.534-538,v.1417.

91. Padmavat,p.113,v.117;Sur Sagar,II,p.57,v.2444 & 2445; p.159,v.3166.

produced or manufactured in south India was famous for the quality of the cloth, as well as, workmanship :

पहिरे दखिन क चीर संवारी । - - - - - 22

The 'Sari' or 'Lahanga' etc. were worn, while going out, or, on certain occasions;⁹³ At home, however, normally, a 'Dhoti' or 'Dhotiya' or 'Dhovati' was worn.⁹⁴ It was generally white in colour, with coloured borders.⁹⁵

On many an occasions, the women wore 'Kochha' or 'Kachhni',⁹⁶ under Their 'Saris' - which covered the body from waist to knees.⁹⁷ Moreover, we also get a reference of a string being put around the waist by the ladies on which was attached a cloth which covered the waist. This was called 'Nibindh'.⁹⁸ However, it is said that the Hindu

92. Mrigavati, p.56, v. 73.

93. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.123.

94. Kabir Granthawali, p.282, v.60; Also, Bihari Satsai, p.477, v.478.

95. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.123.

96. Mrigavati (ed.by) S.G. Misra, p.141; Meerabai ki Padawali, p.103, v.8.

97. K.P. Sahu, p.88; Aspects of Bengali Society, p.47 & p.48 f.n.

98. Vidyapati ki Padawali, p.124, pad 76, Doha 8 & p.134, pad 84, D.2; Also, Chitaiivarta (Narayan Das), p.101, Chaupai 580.

women, generally, wore their 'Saris' etc. Over a type of panties.⁹⁹

The main item of wear for the Hindu women, in the Medieval India was, the tight-fitting bodice¹⁰⁰ or 'Angiya' :

अंगिया कटि , लहंगा उर लाई । - - - - - ¹⁰¹

The 'angiya' (short-jacket or blouse) as referred to , above, was also called 'Kanchuli'¹⁰² or 'Kanchuki' ;

कंचुकी कटि साजि, लहंगा धरति हिरदय माहि । ¹⁰³

That, the 'Kanchukis' were fastened by strings or 'Band' is evident :

घीर पटे , कंचुकि बंद छूटे । - - - - - ¹⁰⁴

99. K.P. Sahu, p.89.

100. R. Misra, p. 121.

101. Sur Sagar, I, p.603, v.1607; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.54, v. 2628; Meera Sudha-Sindhu, p.903, v.26; Also ,p. 641, v.192; Keshav Das's Rasik-Priya, p.20, v.19; Bihari-Ratnakar, p.81, v.189; Also, Ain, III, pp.311-312; Stavorinus, I, p.415.

102. Mukundaram's, 'Kavikankan Chandi', p.159.

103. Sur Sagar, I, pp.606-607, v.1619; Also, p.532, v.1412; Also, Mrigavati (ed) by Misra, p.136, v.203 & p.181, v.325; Madhu Malti (Alld.) p.174, v.206 & p. 396, v.451; Vidya Patiki Padavali, p.347, Pad 208, Doha 19.

104. Sur Sagar, I, pp.534-538, v.1417; Also, p.532, v.1412.

The blouse has also been mentioned as, Choli¹⁰⁵
in the Medieval Hindi literature :

सुर सुतहिं बरजौ नंदरानी, अब तोरत चोली-बंद-होरि ।¹⁰⁶

Or

चोली,वीर, हार ते भाजत, - - - - -¹⁰⁷

The 'Cholis' were of different designs and colours. we, generally, have a reference to that of the red colour,¹⁰⁸ or of five mixed colours.¹⁰⁹

The 'Choli' is, however, unlike 'angiya' - as it is open at the back and fastened with strings,¹¹⁰ They were of two types. One short covering the breasts only,¹¹¹ and the other long enough to reach the waist.¹¹²

105. R. Misra, p.121; f.n. 2.

106. Sur Sagar, I, p.369, v.945; Also, p.362, verses 921 & 922; p.372, v. 954.

107. Ibid; p.528, v.1397; pp.534-538, v.1417; Also Sur Sagar, II, p.57, v.2644 & v. 2645; p.58, v. 2652; Also, Varn Ratnakar, p.4.

108. Padmavat, p. 336, v. 337.

109. H.P. Dwivedi's Kabir, v. 224; Meera Dershan of M.D. Srivastava, p.133, v.10.

110. Sur Sagar, I, p.369, v. 945; Also, A. Rashid, Society & Culture, p.54.

111. A Rashid, Culture and Society, p.54; Stavorinus, I, p.415; Grose, I, pp.142-143.

112. Ibid, Ain, III, 342; Aspects of Bengali Society, p.42.

It was, in fact used by all the sections of the society in Medieval India.¹¹³

Below the bodice or 'angiya' or 'choli', Lahanga or a long shirt was worn by the women.¹¹⁴ The Lahanga was also known as 'chola' :

लारा मेंहर पहिर भल चोला । पहिर सचि जस नखत अमोला ।¹¹⁵

However, Surdas has referred to it as 'Lahanga' itself :

अंगिया कटि , लहंगा उर लाई । - - - - -¹¹⁶

The 'Lahanga' was also, generally, of the red colour :

पगनि बेहरि लाल लहंगा , अंग पंच-रंग सारि ।¹¹⁷

The 'Lahanga' was also called 'ghaghra' ¹¹⁸ and, it covered the lower portion of the body. Often, it was put on with a 'Sari',¹¹⁹

113. Ain, III, pp.311-312, P.N.Chopra, Glimpses, p.13.

114. R. Misra, p.121; Meera ki Shabdavali, pp.13 & 64; Sur Sagar, I, pp.506 & 619. see, Also, K.M. Ashraf, p.213.

115. Padmavat, p.176, v.184; p.177, v.185; p.336, v.337; p.342, v.342 Etc.

116. Sur Sagar, I, p.603, v.1607; pp.606-607, v.1619;

117. Sur Sagar, I, pp.619-620, v.1661.

118. Sur Sagar, I, p.304, v.437; Kabir, p.256, v.89; Meera Mandakini, p.40, v.89; Matiram Satsai, p.454, v.108.

119. Sur Sagar, I, p.304, v.437.

Alongwith the 'Angiya' and the 'Lahanga', the 'Odhni' was always used - to complete the set¹²⁰

ओढ़नि आनि दिखाई मौको - - - - - ।¹²¹

It was a piece of large cloth and was used for covering the upper part of the body and head.¹²² This was also known as 'Aanchal',¹²³ or 'Chunri'.¹²⁴ The 'Lahanga' always had an Izar to keep it tight at the waist.¹²⁵

On account of the excessive heat of this country, ordinarily nobody wore gloves or stockings¹²⁶ and, sometimes, the ladies of the well-to-do classes put on precious jewels

120. R. Misra, p.121; A Rashid, Society and Culture, p.54.

121. Sur Sagar, I, pp.503-504, v.1313.

122. R. Misra, p.121; K.M. Ashraf, p.213; S.M. Jaffar, p.175.

123. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 205 & 760.

124. Sur Sagar, I, p.501, v.1363 & p.509, v. 1402; Also, , II, p.51, v.2610. Also, Meera ki Shabdavali, p.25; Rahiman vilas, p.33, v.62; p.42, v.11; & p.44, v.28; Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.380, pad 10; p.616, pad 121 Etc.

125. R. Misra, p.121; Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 62.

126. Storia, II, p.341 & III, p.40; Therenot, p.52.

and other ornaments over their breeches.¹²⁷ Poor women , moved about without shoes, but the rich ladies normally put on shoes of varied designs and colours and, sometimes, they were profusely adorned with costly silver and golden artistic designs.¹²⁸ They, used artistic slippers covered with silver and golden flowers.¹²⁹ They, also, wore heel - less slippers called 'Paposh',¹³⁰ - which were of various patterns.¹³¹

Gosmetics And Toilet : (Men) :

The leisured classes had special facilities for cultivating physical attractiveness among both sexes.¹³² Thus, men , too, especially of the higher social classes, practised various contrivances to enhance their physical charm and attractiveness.¹³³ In an universal craze to look

127. Storia, III, p.40.

128. Bhushan Granthawali, p.63, Kavitt, 5; Thevenot, p.52; Storia, I, p.193.

129. Thevenot, p.37; Kaumudi, p.101.

130. R. Misra, p.123.

131. Ibid; Thevenot, p.37.

132. K.M. Ashraf, p.214.

133. Barani, p.137, finds fault with the common people for adorning themselves to look beautiful.

younger than one's actual age, hair dyes¹³⁴ of numerous varieties seemed to have been freely used to blacken the grey hair. The hair were properly dressed and combed.¹³⁵ The combs were called 'Kankahi',¹³⁶ or 'Shana'.¹³⁷ Ibn Batuta referred to the use of the mustard oil for hair-dressing.¹³⁸ We, also, have a reference of the use of other scented-oils by men for their hair-dressing.¹³⁹

It was a common practice among the people of Medieval India, to brush and cleanse their teeth and tongue every morning soon after leaving their beds,

134. Amir Khusrau, M.A., p.173; J.A.S.B, I, 1935, p.269 f.n.; (I 'Jaz-i-khusravi, III, p.33; Basatin-ul-uns, 166.) S.M. Jaffar, p.176; Also, A. Rashid, pp.55-56;

135. Chhitai Varta, p.117, v.650; Madhu Malti, p.397, v.452; 'Srikrishna Vijai' , p.145.

136. Ibid.

137. I'Jaz-i-khusravi', I, pp.178 & 214; Also, Ain, I, p.134.

138. Ibn Batuta, III, p. 53.

139. Visal Deo Raso, p.138, v.96; Chhitai varta, p.117, v.650; Also, Della Valle, pp. 376-377.

with the help of a 'Datun'.¹⁴⁰ The 'Datun' has been referred to as 'Datwani' or 'Datuni' or 'Datoni' in the Medieval Hindi literature :

दतवनि ते दुहँ करी सुखारी - - - - - 141

or

प्रातहि ते मे दियो जगाइ । दतवनि करि जु गए दोर भाइ ।¹⁴²

They also used tooth - picks for the cleansing of their teeth ;

पेहँ भेषि के खरिका सिए ।¹⁴³

The requirements of bath, particularly among the Hindus, were very elaborate.¹⁴⁴ It appears that, the public in general, took bath daily. The bath, in fact had a religious sanctity too.¹⁴⁵ The princes and men of the wealthier classes had adequate toilet arrangements at home for their baths.

140. It is used for the same even today; see also, Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.47, v.22 :

Also, Ram Chandrika, p.149, v.24; And, Tavernier, p.44; Caxeri, p.168; See Also, Badauni, III, p.414; And, Ain, III, pp.311-312.

141. Sur Sagar, I, p.398, v.407; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.45, v.2583.

142. Ibid, p.448, v.1165; Also, p.477, v.1227.

143. Mrigavati, p.120, v.149, Also, Badauni, III, p.436.

144. S.M. Jaffar, p.176.

145. Barbosa, I, p.23 says, that the Hindus thought that it also washed off their daily sins; 'Also refer to Kabir p.352, v.20 who reputes this popular belief of 'baths in places of pilgrimages, for purification of the sins; Also p.353, verses 21 & 22.

These were known as 'Hammams'.¹⁴⁶ They, also, took bath before the intercourse with their spouses.¹⁴⁷

The preparations for bath were very elaborate and various kinds of scented oils and pastes were rubbed on the body, before bathing :

अंग-मरदन करिबे को लागी, उबटन तेल घरी ।¹⁴⁸

Sometimes, only mustard-oil was rubbed on the body before bathing, especially, by the general public.¹⁴⁹ How very essential oil had become for a bath is evident from the description of Mukandram, a poet, of the sixteenth century who laments the lack of oil in his bath.¹⁵⁰

Thus, the 'Ubtan' had become an essential thing before the bath of the leisured classes and, generally ,

146.f.n.145;Also, Zafar-ul-walik (Ed.Dennison Ross), I,p.209.

147. Sachau, p.181; Also,Mrigavati,pp.193-196,verses 228, 229 and 230.

148. Sur Sagar,I,p.606,v.1618.

149. Vidyapati,p.184, Chhand 24,Dotra 101 :

Also, Srikrishna Prem Tarangani, p.181.

150. Bengal In The Sixteenth Century,p.63; Also Ibn Batuta, I,p.233;

it was made of sandal & other perfume pastes.¹⁵¹

Some historians have claimed that, the people in Medieval India , generally, used the 'Myrobalans' during their baths, instead of soap, as the latter was not very common.¹⁵² But, the reference to the soap-manufacturers, as a separate professional class, in Medieval period corroborates the fact of its popularity in Medieval India. Thus, we come across both the words 'Sabun' and 'Sabunagarin' in the contemporary literature:

सबै अंग सबनीगरनि, बीसत मन न कलैं ।
सेत बसन कीने मनो, साबुन लाइ मतेंग ।¹⁵³

It can, further be inferred that the soaps were used both for the cleaning of the bodies, as well as, the clothes.¹⁵⁴ We also find the references to soaps in

151. Sur Sagar, I, p.324, v.803; Also, Srikrishna Prem Tarangani, p.181. Kavitt Ratnakar, p.73, v.10 & p.76, v.17; Careri; p. 246; 'Dev Sudha', p.95, v.131 & 132, p.168, v.271 & p.143, v.222.

152. Aspects of Bengali Society, p.48; J.A.S.B, I, 1935, p.280; Also, K.M. Ashraf, 215; And, P.M. Chopra, Glimpses of Social life, p.15.

153. Rahiman Vitas, p.36, v.90.

154. Rahiman Vitas, p.36, v.90; Also, Siyar-ul-Auliya, p.115 and I'jaz-i-khusravi, V, p.123; And, A.Rashid, p.55.

the writings of some other poets of the sixteenth Century, North India.¹⁵⁵ Nanak calls it 'Sabunn' :

मूत पलीती क्यङ्ग होय , दे साबुण ओह लहरे धोय ।¹⁵⁶

While, Kabir has referred to it as 'Savann' :

बिन सावण पाण्णि बिना , निरमल करे सुभाइ ।¹⁵⁷

They men also used the various pastes of mixed herbals during the bath.¹⁵⁸

The men not only used the perfumed oils, perfumes and different scented pastes during the bath, but, also, anointed their bodies with these varieties of indigenous perfumes and pastes, after the bath. And

155. Kabir Vachanavali, p.164, v.166; Also, Nanak Vani, p.88, Vani 20; Also B.P. Mazumdar, p.207.

156. A Critical study of Adi- Granth, p. 131.

157. Kabir, p.133, v.3.

158. Ain, I, p.75 & p.81; Also, Dev-Sudha, p.95, v.131 & v.132; Kavitt- Ratnakar p.73, v.10 & p.76, v.17; Mrigavati, p. 131, v. 192, Meera Smriti Granth p.73, v.73; Madhu Malti, pp. 18 & 27; Nanak Vani, p.426; Also, Vidyapati ki Padavali, p. 180, v. 135 & p.190, v.145; And Barbosa, I, pp.113 & 141.

it was considered to be foolish, not to anoint one's body with these pastes and perfumes :

निंदित मूढं मलय चंदन को, राख अंग लपटावे ।¹⁵⁹

Jayasi has also referred to a number of perfumes, herbal pastes or myrobalans used even after the bath :

- - - - - । अगर कुंकुमा भरा सरीरा ।¹⁶⁰

Of the perfumes used by men, we get the references of 'Agar'¹⁶¹, 'Chandan',¹⁶² or sandal-wood, 'Argaja',¹⁶³,

159. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 118-119, v.356; Also, Ain, I, p.75: 'the body was anointed with other pastes made from the extracts of different flowers also;' Barbosa, I, pp.113 & 141.

160. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthawali, p.359, v.56.

161. Ibid; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Madhu Malti, p.44, v.53; Sri Krishna Kirtan, p.120; Bharat Chandra Granthawali, II, p.19; Mangal Chandur Geet, p.82; Sur Sagar, II, p.71, v.2724; Ain, I, pp.75-77.

162. Sur Sagar, I, pp.118-119, v.356; pp.268-269, v.646; p.423, v.1094; p.487, v.1259 Etc. Ain, II, p.126; Barbosa, I, pp.113 & 141; 'Dadu Dayal ka Sabad', p.68, v.32; Dev-Sudha, p.95, v.131 & v.132; Mangal Chandur Geet, p.82; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; And, Bengal In the Sixteenth Century, p.63.

163. Sur Sagar, I, p.110, v.332; pp.632-633, v.1693 Etc; Sur Sagar, II, p.54, v.2628 & p.71, v.2724; 'Meera Smriti Granth', p.73, v.73; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Barbosa, I, p.205; Also, Dev-Sudha, p.95, v.131 & 132, p.168, v.271, p.143, v.222; Ain, I, p.81; And, Travels in India In the 17th Century, p.447.

'Kapoor',¹⁶⁴ or Kamphor, 'Kesar',¹⁶⁵ 'Kasturi',¹⁶⁶ 'Kumkum' or Kumkuh,¹⁶⁷ 'Mrig Mud',¹⁶⁸ Similarly, we get a reference of 'Med',¹⁶⁹ 'Beva',¹⁷⁰ Parimal¹⁷¹ or musk and, also, 'Chova',¹⁷²

164. Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, p.359, v.56; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Madhu Malti; p.135; 'Chhitai Varta', p.20, v.186; Varn -Ratnakar, p.11; Barbosa, I, pp.205-207; Also Padnavat, p.335, v.336; Sur Sagar, I, p.110, v.332; & Sur Sagar, II, p.71, v.2724 Etc.
165. Sur Sagar, I, p.101, v.307; p.359, v.912; Sur Sagar, II, p.57, v.2645; p.73, v.2732; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Mangal Chandur Geet, p.82; Dev-Sudha, p.95, verses 131 & 132; p.168, v.271 Etc.; Barbosa, I, pp.113 & 141.
166. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthawali, p.359, v.56; Sur Sagar, I, p.149, v.407; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Aspects of Bengali Society, p.48; J.A.S.B., I, 1935, p.280.
167. Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Mangal Chandur Geet, p.82; Madhu Malti, p.385, v.439; Varn Ratnakar, p.11; And, Basant vilas, p.5.
168. Madhu Malti, pp.18 & 27; Nanak Vani, p.426; Vidyapatiki Padavali, p.180, v.135 & p.190, v.145; And, Marsai Mehte 'Na Pad, p.54, Pad 20, Doha 1.
169. Mrigavati, p.193, v.228
170. Ibid.
171. Ibid.
172. Ibid; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.268-269, v.646; pp.274-275, v.658; p.275, v.659. And, Padnavat, pp.125-126, v.130; p.278, v.290 & pp.314-315, v.316 and v.318.

The men also used Collyrium, that is 'Kajal' or 'Anjan' or Surma for the eyes in order to enhance their radiance and maintain a good eye-sight :

अंजन दियो तो किरकिरी, सुरमा दियो न जाय ।

जिन ओंखिन सों हरि लख्यो, रहि मन बलि बलि जाय ।।¹⁷³

That, 'Kajal' or 'Anjan'¹⁷⁴ were used for the eyes, apart from the 'Surma',¹⁷⁵ is, thus, evident.

When a person went out to meet someone, he, generally applied 'Tilak',¹⁷⁶ mark on his forehead and, chewed betel-leaf.¹⁷⁷

We have a reference of the men applying Mahawar on their feet, especially on certain occasions like marriage etc:

जावक जुत पद कमल सुहाए । - - - - -¹⁷⁸

173. Rahiman Vilas, p.3, v.21;

174. Ibid; Ain, I, p.75; History of Hindi Literature by Keay, p.75; Kabir Sakhi Sar, p.109, v.2; Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.163, v.9

175. Rahiman vilas, p.3, v.21; Meera Madhuri, p.107, v.300; Zafar-ul-Walihanvi Muzzafar Walih (Ed. D. Ross), p.98; Also refer to Amir Khusrau's 'Matla-ul-Anwar', p.194 & His 'I' jaz-i-khusravi, IV, p.328.

176. Manas, p.302, v.326.5; Also, Barave' Ramayan, II, p.26; Chaitanya Bhagwat, p.44; Madhu Malti, p.61, v.81; Narsai Mehte' na Pad, p.12, v.16; Ibn Batuta, II, p.319; And, Barbosa, I, p.205, Sur Sagar, I, p.101, v.360; p.160, v.417; p.295, v.717; p.359, v.912; p.423, v.1094 Etc; Also, II, p.6, v.2394; p.21, v.2455, p.159, v.3168.

177. Manas, p.305, v.329; Rahiman vilas, p.30, v.13 & p.125; Careri, pp.205-206; I'jaz-i-khusravi, II, pp.252-258; Travels In India, p.180; Ain, I, p.72.

178. Manas, p.301, v.326.1.

Women and Cosmetics :

Next to dress were cosmetic and toilet, which mostly occupied the attention of the women in Medieval India.¹⁷⁹ By the use of various cosmetics, they attempted an enhancement of their beauty. In India of the sixteenth century, sixteen forms of personal adornment, such as bathing dressing, putting on ornaments, jewelery and using cosmetics were prevalent.¹⁸⁰ These have been described in details by Jayasi, specifically, in his Padmavat, who says that, "they go in for bathing, application of sandal. and vermilion on the parting of hair, a spangle on the forehead, collyrium, silken- clothes, ear-rings, nose- studs, betel to redden the lips, necklaces, armlets, girdle and anklets etc."¹⁸¹

Hair - Dressing :-

The hair dressing constituted a major aspect of the 'Shringar' or ornamentation of the women in Medieval India. Long hair was considered a mark of beauty and, Tulsi-

179. R. Misra, p. 123.

180. Ibid; Also, Ain, III, p.312; Padmavat, pp.482-483, verses 466 & 467;

181. Padmavat, pp.287, v.296 and p.288, v.297; Also P.N. Chopra, Society and culture, p.12.

Das refers to it as the 'Ornament of the women'.¹⁸² Both Jayasi and Abdul Fazl list them among the sixteen forms of personal adornment.¹⁸³

Girls, generally, allowed their hair to grow from the age of twelve onwards.¹⁸⁴ The hair of the Muslim women hung down behind them-twisted in silk,¹⁸⁵ in the case of the wealthier ladies. The Hindu women oiled, combed and plaited their long waylocks of hair, into a Beni or choti.¹⁸⁶

The hair were generally, parted in the middle;

के पत्रावली पाटी पारी । ओ रचि चित्र विचित्र सेवारी ।¹⁸⁷

And, often these were twisted and tied behind their head.¹⁸⁸

The use of false hair also has a reference,¹⁸⁹ in Medieval India. Women also used flowers and ornaments (in the case of the well-to-do women) to decorate their hair.¹⁹⁰

182. Manas, p.1016, v.101.1 : अकला कच भण - - ।"
Mandelslo, p.50. Also Mrigavati, pp.40-41, v.57.

183. Padmavat, pp.287-288, verses, 296 and 297; Ain, III, p.312.

184. Manucci, III, p.40; R. Misra, p.124.

185. Terry, Early Travels, p.309; De laet, p.81; And careri, II, p.248. Also, Mrigavati, pp.50-51, v.65.

186. Padmavat, p.96, v.99, p.500, v.481; Mrigavati, pp.213-214, v.251; Sur Sagar, I, p.506, v.1321 and p.507, v.1322.

187. Padmavat, pp.487-488, v.1321 and p.507, v.1322.

188. Narsai Mehta'na Pad, p.11, Pad 16, Doha 5; Bihari Satsai, p.687; Chitravali, p.46, v.117; Travels in India, p.182.

189. Salejore, Vol. II, p.302.

190. Sur Sagar, I, p.506, v.1321; II, pp.170-171, v.3228; Vidyapati ki Padavali, Pad 42, Doha 6; Nasai Mehta'va Pad, p.126, v.224; Fryer says, "Their hair-----which the rich embellish with gold, coronets and rich jewels the poor with string of Jasmine flowers." Fryer Vol. II, p.117; Stavornips, Vol. I, p.415; And, Padmavat, p.288, v.297; Early Travels (Foster), p.22; Rahiman vilas, p.33, v.54.

'Sindoor' or vermillion was applied between the parting of the hair, that is 'Mang', by the Hindu women :
साजि माँग पुनि सेंदुर सारा । - - - - - 191

Surdas also mentions the 'Sindoor'

भारहि सोभा सिर सिंदूर । 192

Sometimes, this parting of hair was also adorned with precious stones and ornaments. 193

सिरे जो रत्न माँग बेसारा । जानहुँ गँगन दूट से तारा । 194

And, alongwith pearls etc. we do have a reference of sandal-powder being applied on the parting of the hair :

॥ माँग ॥ सेत चंदन घसि भरी । के रे पाति मोतिन्ह के छरी ॥ 195

The vermillion or 'Sindoor' was kept in a small-pot, generally, made of wood and known as 'Sindhora'. 196 or Sindhori :

- - - - - कोई सेंदुर की गहे सिंधोरी । 197

191. Padmavat, p.287, v.296; pp.487-488, v.471 Etc.

192. Sur Sagar, II, p.183, v.3286; pp.172-173, v.3231; Also, I, pp.265-267, v.642.

193. Ibid, p.57, v.2645 and p.74, verses 2735 & 2736.

194. Padmavat, p.288, v.297.

195. Mrigavati, p.40, v.50.

196. Kabir Granthawali, p.219, v.128; Chandayan, p.124, Chand 88, Doha 2.

197. Padmavat, p.278, v.290.

A 'bindi' or dot was also put on the fore-head,¹⁹⁸ to add to the 'Shringar' or ornamentation. It was, generally, referred to as 'tilak' :

- - - - - । पुनि तिलाट रचि तिलक सँवारा 199

Surdas calls it 'tika' also ;

- - - - - , टीका भाल दियो ।²⁰⁰

Sometimes, the women used vermilion itself for applying this dot or 'bindu' on the fore-head :

भाल लाल - सिंदूर - बिंदु पर , - - - - -²⁰¹

At times, a little crimson dot was produced by 'Javak or Menhdi'²⁰² or 'MrigMad' or 'musk',²⁰³ or 'Kesar',²⁰⁴ etc. We even have a reference to a 'tika' or 'bindu' which was bejewelled or adorned with precious stones.²⁰⁵

198. R. Misra, p.125; Bihari, pp.15-17; Mati Ram Satsai, p.453.

199. Padmavat, p.287, v.296, p.288, v.297 & p.489, v.472; Sur Sagar, II, p.177, v.3253.

200. Sur Sagar, II, p.57, v.2645;

201. Sur Sagar, II, p.74, v.2736; Also, I, p.780, v.2116 & p.792, v.2158.

202. Sur Sagar, II, p.177, v.3253; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.41, v.31; p.48, v.55.

203. Sur Sagar, II p.74, v.2736; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.35, v.11.

204. Sur Sagar, II, p.171, v.3229; Also, Bihari Satsai, p.93.

205. Sur Sagar, I, p.780, v.2116: "टीका धरयो जराउ ।"

And, p.792, v.2158 : " मोतिनि भाल जराइ को टीको, - - -

The women in Medieval India, reddened their lips with the betel-leaf which served them as lip-stick :

दसन स्याम पानन्ह रंग पाके । बिहंसल कबोल धर अस ताके १०६

Or

सुरंग अधर ओ लीन्ह तँबोरा । - - - - - 207

Even Surdas has referred to the colouring of the lips by the pair of betel, that is, 'beera' ;

- - - - - , अधरनि बीरा रंग । ²⁰⁸

Apart from reddening the lips, the betel served the purpose of imparting sweet smell.²⁰⁹

Similarly, the teeth were coloured black by the application of 'Missi' or 'Missiya' (a kind of powder)

रतन भीज रंग मसि भै स्यामा । ओही छाज पदारथ नामा । ²¹⁰

206. Padmavat, p.495, v.477; Also, p.103, v.106; 'I' Jaz-i-Khusravi, II, pp.252-258; Mrigavati, pp.47-48, verses 60 and 61.

207. Ibid, p.289, v.298; Also, p.494, v.476 & p.495, v.477.

208. Sur Sagar, II, p.57, v.2645; Also Al-Beruni(ab.)p.86.

209. Ibid, p.265 & p.623; Rahiman vitas, p.33, v.51; Bihari Satsai, p.49; Ras Raj, Mati Ram Granthawali, p.349; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.22. And, R. Misra, p.125;

210. Padmavat, p.495, v.477; Also, p.104, v.107 & pp.454-455, v.443; Kabir Granthawali, p.35, v.1; Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.342-343, v.11; And, Padavali Bangiya of Vidyapati Thakur, CXXXII, CXVII; Also, K.M. Ashraf, p.216; Mrigavati, p.48, v.61.

The women also used 'Mehndi' or Henna to dye their palms and feet, as is evident from the sixteenth century Hindi literature :

बाँटनवारे को लगे , ज्यों मेहदी को रंगे ।।²¹¹

Or

सहजहिँ जानहुँ मेहदी रची । - - - - -²¹²

However, 'Mahawar'²¹³ was also used to dye the feet. It was applied on child- births, birthdays, marriages and all such occasions by the 'Nayin' who received money & other things for the same :
नाइन बीतहु नच रंगी होई , ल्याउ महावर बेग ।
लसु टा अरु छुमका देहुई सारी दाइ को नेग ।²¹⁴

The 'Mahawar' has also been referred to, as 'Alta'²¹⁵ by the Hindi literateurs of Medieval India. as well as 'Javkava' :

अबरन पाय जलकवा , नाइन दोन ।²¹⁶

We also have a reference of Gulal used as a cosmetic by the women in Medieval India.²¹⁷

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211. Rahiman Vilas, p.26, v.257; Manucci, II, p.341; Bihari Satsai, p.36; Ras Raj', Mati Ram Granthawali, p.349.
212. Padmavat, p.501, v.482; Also, R. Misra, p.125 & P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.13; And, Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.488, v.55; Ibu Batuta, III, p.275.
213. Vidyapati ki Padavali, p.145, Pad 91, Doha 12 & p.204, Pad 129, Doha 10; Rasik-Priya, XIII Prakash, p.109, Doha 44; Mrigavati, p.54, v.70; Kabir Gr. p.119, v.35; Sur Sagar, II, pp.178-179, v.3263; p.154, v.3138 Etc.
214. Sur Sagar, I, pp.274-275, v.658; Rahiman Vilas, p.44, v.29.
215. Chandidas Padavali, cited in K.P. Sahu, p.109; Vidyapati ki Padavali; p.89, v.62;
216. Rahiman vilas, p.44, v.29; p.50, v.74 & p.129, Note 29.
217. Sur Sagar, II, p.73, v.2732;

There are frequent references to the use of turmeric by the women of all classes of Tamilian Society.²¹⁸ But, its use was not, altogether unknown in the North, as is evident from its reference as a constituent of women toilet by Kabirdas :

- - - - - , सुख दुख माये हलद चढ़ाई ।।²¹⁹

Sometimes, the ladies would take their bath, after the application of scented oils on their bodies.²²⁰

The women of the richer section of the Medieval Indian society, also applied sandal- paste on their bodies it had a cooling effect too :

मलयागिरि के पीठि सेवारी । - - - - -²²¹

218. Journal of Venkateshvara Oriental Institute Vol III, 1946, pp. 29-32; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.28, note 194.

219. Kabir Granthawali, p.280, v.24.

220. Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.342-343, v.11; Chhitai -Varta, p.457, Doha, 316; Also, Vidyapati's Kirtilata, III Pallav, p.184, Chhand 24, Doha 101.

221. Padmevat, pp.111-112, v.115; Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.170-171, v.3228; p.178, v.3260 and pp.178-179, v.3263 Etc; And, Kabir Granthawali, p.200, v.93 & p.322, v.33; Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthawali, pp.358-359, v.54; Mrigavati, p.54, v.70 & p.193, v.228; And, Vidya Pati Ki Padavali, p. 59, Pad 33, Doha 8.

The women also used a number of scents and perfumes, which must have been manufactured by the indigenous people, who were called Gandhee or 'Gandhin'.²²² The sixteen forms of personal adornment would have had no meaning at all, without the sweet smelling perfumes or 'Itar' :

करिके सोरह सिंगरवा, अतर लगाइ ।²²³

These scents or perfumes were applied on their bodies after the bath :

- - - - - । सवे सुगंध चटाए अंग ।²²⁴

Of the perfumes we find references of Med :
बोधि रहा जग बासना परिमल मेद सुगंध ।²²⁵
As is evident from the above verse musk or 'Parimal' has been referred to with 'Med'.²²⁶

222. Rahiman vilas, p.33, v. 57; Also, Padmavat, p.39, v.39.

223. Ibid, p.48, v.64.

224. Padmavat, p.176, v.184; Also Mrigavati, p.193, v.228.

225. Padmavat, p.113, v.117; Also, pp.36-37, v.36; p.47, v.47; pp.113-114, v.117; pp.314-315, v.316; Ain, I, p.30; Madhu Malti; pp.18 & 27; Nanak Vani, p.426; Vidyapati ki Padavali, p.180, v.135 & p.190, v.145.

226. Padmavat, p.113, v.117; Also, pp.333-334, v.335.

Of the other perfumes, we have references of 'Bena'²²⁷
'Agar',²²⁸ 'Kapoor',²²⁹ 'Kesar',²³⁰ 'Kumkum',²³¹ 'Kasturi',²³² 'Kewra'²³³
and, also, 'Argaja' :

संघ अरगज मा मग रज लोचन पीत सरोज । 23 4

227. Padmavat, p.335, v.336; Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthavali, p.359, v.56; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228.
228. Padmavat, pp.330-331, v.332; Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthavali, p.359, v.56; Sur Sagar, II, p.71, v.2724; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Madhu Malti, p.44, v.53; Sri Krishna Kirtan, p.120.
229. Sur Sagar, I, p.110, v.332; pp.274-275, v.658; Also, II, p.71, v.2724; Padmavat, p.335, v.336 & f.n.4 (p.335); Akhri Kalam, p.359, v.56. Madhu Malti, p.135; Chhitai Varta, p.20, v.186; And, Also, Varn-Ratnakar, p.11.
230. Sur Sagar, I, p.101, v.307; p.359, v.912 Etc; Also, II, p.57, v.2645 & p.73, v.2732; Also Prithvi Raj Raso, II, p.599, Samay 23, Doha 2.
231. Sur Sagar, I, p.559, v.1781; Also, II, p.89, v.2808; p.152, v.3126; p.179, v.3264 Etc. Mrigavati, p.193, v.228; Madhu Malti, p.385, v.439; Basant vilas, p.5; And, Varn Ratnakar, p.11.
232. Sur Sagar, I, p.149, v.407; Padmavat, p.278, v.290; Akhri Kalam, Jayasi Granthavali, p.359, v.56; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228;
233. Padmavat, p.4, v.4; Also, pp.36-37, v.36.
234. Padmavat, pp.321-322, v.323 & pp.316-317, v.318; Sur Sagar, I, p.110, v.332; Pp.632-633, v.1693; Also, II, p.54, v.2628 & p.71, v.2724; Meera Smriti Granth, p.73, v.73; Mrigavati, p.193, v.228.

Apart from the above- mentioned perfumes we, also, have a reference of a novel perfume which was produced by the mixture of sandal or 'Chandan', 'Agar', Kasturi and 'Kesar' in equal proportions. This was known as 'Chatursam'²³⁵

बीघो' सीघी' चतुरसम चौके चार पुराह ।²³⁶

Bathing was a preliminary requirement for women, also, before starting their daily business. We have reference of baths twice a day even.²³⁷ Moreover, the bath also had a religious sanctity. It was supposed to wash off the sins also.²³⁸ In Medieval India, moreover, the concept

235. Padmavat, p.262, v.276; pp.321-322, v.323 pp.330-331, v.332; Also Varn -Ratnakar, p.13.

236. Manas, p.270, v. 296.

237. Barbosa, p.113; Also, Sachau, I, p.181; And, K.M. Ashraf, p.215.

238. Ibid.

of 'Solah Shringar',²³⁹ was very popular. And, this sixteen forms of personal adornment, inevitably, included bathing :

प्रथमहिं मंजन होइ सररीरु । - - - - - 240

Or

कै मंजन तब किरहु अन्हानू । - - - - - 241

Before taking bath, unguents were rubbed on the body to clean them, as well as, to add to the radiance of it and, this was known as 'Ubtan'.²⁴² Sometimes, they applied scented oils or lotions on their bodies, before taking bath.²⁴³

239. Rahiman viias, p.48, v.64; Padmavat,p.287,v.296.

240. Padmavat,p.287,v.296; Also, Mrigavati,p.219,v.257;

241. Ibid,p.288, v.297; Also, Ain,III,p.312.

242. Refer 4 above ; Also, Madhu Malti,p.385,v.439; Matla-ul-Anwar,p.194.

243. J.W.P.H.S., New Series,Part III, Vol.II,1955,p.145; Chhitai Varta, p.451,v.316; Mrigavati,p.193,v.228; Also, Ibn Batuta,I,p.233. Bengal In the 16th Century p.63; And, Varn- Ratnakar, p.12.

Moreover, we have references of women bathing in ponds and rivers and, that, too, without their clothes on :

कोल करहिं वै सबद सोहाई । सखर तीर निमिख मह आई ।
अभरन चीर उतारि धरि पैती सवे अन्हाइ ।²⁴⁴

Not only the poets composing the long-love poems or 'Premakhyan' mention about this practice but, it has been referred to by, a true bhakt-poet, Surdas also :

बसन बिना अस्नान करति हम । - - - - -²⁴⁵

Surdas has referred to how the mythological Krishna had tried in vain to stop this practice but it continued :
एक दिवस आपुन आए तहें । नव तरुनी अस्नान करति जहें ॥
बसन धरे जल-तीर उतारी । आपुन जल पैती सुकुमारी ॥²⁴⁶

And, they even bathed in the rivers etc. during the chilly winter season.²⁴⁷

294. Mrigavati pp. 59-60, v.77; Also, pp.57-58, v.75; And p.61, v.79; pp.61-62, v.80; And, p.37, v.46.

245. Sur Sagar, I, p.526, v. 1390; Also, p.525, v.1287; p.528, v.1397; p.529, v.1402; pp.529-530, v.1403, 1405 Etc; Also, pp.530-534, v.1406-v.1416.

246. Sur Sagar, I, pp.534-538, v.1417.

247. Ibid; Al-Beruni (ab.) pp.231-233.

Antimony or Collyrium :

Antimony or Collyrium was used to add to the radiance of the eyes. And, it has been referred to as, 'Anjan' in contemporary Medieval Hindi literature :

पुनि अंजन दूहु नैन करई । - - - - - 248

Similarly, it has been mentioned as 'Kajjal' :

जैसे दीपक तम भये , कज्जल वमन कराय । 249

Abdur Rahim. Khan-Khana has also used the regional dialectical variations and referred to it, as 'Kajra'²⁵⁰ and 'Kajarwa'²⁵¹. We also find references of its much purer form, that is, "Kajal" being used to describe antimony in the Medieval Hindi literature :

कबीर रेख स्यंदर की, काजल दिया न जाइ । 252

248. Padmavat, p.287, v.296; Also, p.289, v.298; Rahiman vilas, p.3, v.21; And, Sur Sagar, II, p.179, v.3266; pp.185-186, v.3299 pp.189-190, v.3818; p.198, v.3358; pp.335-336, v.3854 Etc; And, Bihari Satsai, p.33 and 42.

249. Rahiman vilas, p.19, v.185; Also Sur Sagar, II, p.187, v.3307, p.202, v.3382 Etc.

250. Ibid, p.44, v.26

251. Ibid, p.47, v.50 & v.54.

252. Kabir Granthawali, p.36, v.4; Sur Sagar, I, pp.54-56, v.166; pp.265-267, v.24; pp.308-309, v.757; p.315, v.778 Etc; Also, II, p.187, v. 3307 Etc. And Padmavat, p.491, v.473; Meera Sudha- Sindhu, p.163, v.9.

We also have a reference to 'Surma' being used in the eyes - it was also a type of antimony :

अंजन दियो तो किरकिरी , सुरमा दियो न जाय । ²⁵³

Mirror :

The mirrors were regularly used in Medieval India, as is evident from their references in contemporary Hindi literature :

ज्यो दर्पन - प्रतिबिंब , त्यो सब सृष्टि करी ²⁵⁴

Thus, it is clear that the mirrors were generally used by the people, while getting dressed-up to see their faces :

हैंसै हैंसत, बिलखैं बिलखत हैं, ज्यो दर्पन में झाई ²⁵⁵

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253. Rahiman vilas, p.3,v.21; Bihari Satsai,p.679; Meera-Madhuri p.107,v.300; Matla-ul-Anwar,p.194; And,'I'jaz-i-khusravi', IV, p.328; Zafar-ul-Wahidi Muzaffar Walih (ed.by.) Sir. D. Ross, I,p.98.
254. Sur Sagar,I,pp.125-126,v.379;Also,Madhu Malti,p.375, v.429; Kabir-Sangrah,p.120;Kaharnama,p.91;Akhravat, Jayasi Granthawali,pp.329-330,v.39;And,Rahiman vilas, p.49,v.72; Also,p.55,v.114.
255. Sur Sagar,I,p.64v.195; Also,p.122,v.168;And, Sur Sagar,II,p.89,v.2808;pp.146-147,v.3100,3101 & 3102; J.U.P.R.S., New Series,Part III,Vol.II,1955,p.148; Rasik-Priya,p.41,Savakyya 5 of IV Prakash & p.175, v.10 of XIII Prakash.

The mirrors were generally round and square in shape.²⁵⁶
They were fixed on the walls or put on the dressing-
tables. Because, whenever, otherwise, we have its reference.
For example, the mirrors with handles have been separately
referred to :

"कर-दर्पण प्रतिबिम्ब निहारति , चकित भई सुकुमारी ।" ²⁵⁷

These mirrors with handles or 'Kar-darpan' were also
carried by the barbers while, going from one place to
another, to attend to their customers.²⁵⁸

Thus, the mirrors were widely popular and
prevalent in use, both at homes by men and women, as
well as, by the barbers. These mirrors were manufactured
locally by the blacksmiths or 'Lohars' :

- - - - - । जिमि लोहार फन दरपन गढ़ई ॥ ²⁵⁹

Moreover, it is corroborated by the evidences that
India began to import European mirrors very late in
the sixteenth Century.²⁶⁰

256. Grose I, pp. 113-114.

257. Sur Sagar, II, p. 91, v. 2818; Also, I, pp. 800-801, v. 2187.

258. Coryat, Travels in India, p. 450.

259. Akhvat, Jaysi Gr. pp. 329-330, v. 39.

260. Journal, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, VII, p. 159.

That, the mirrors in Medieval India, were made of metals like iron and steel is also evident.²⁶¹

ORNAMENTS :

Ornamentation signifies the addition of beauty, glamour and grace of a thing. Thus, ornaments were used, as a primitive instinct, to make oneself beautiful and imposing. In Medieval India, the use of ornaments had a religious significance both among the Hindus, as well as, the Muslims.²⁶² However, the Hindus were more fond of the ornaments than the Muslims,²⁶³ who just more amulets.²⁶⁴ The Hindu men, thus, adorned themselves with a number of precious ornaments,²⁶⁵ apart from the arms they carried, which were supposed to be their real ornaments²⁶⁶ in the Medieval milieu.

261. Akhravat, Jayasi Gr., pp.329-330, v.39; And, Della Valles, pp.376-377; asserts that these mirrors were made of steel.

262. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.14.

263. P.N. Chopra, Glimpses of Social life, p.15.

264. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.16; Also Jamila Brij Bhushan, p.71.

265. Sachau, I, p.181; Barbosa, p.104;

266. Ain, III, p.34; K.P. Sahu, p.105; K.M. Ashraf, p.217; Also, P.N. Chopra, Glimpses of Social Life, p.16.

Ornaments of the Children :-

The children were, generally, adorned with ornaments, as a mark of love and affection bestowed on them. The most popular ornament of the children was, however, small anklets or 'Paijani', which, made sweet sound, when they walked around in the house :

अरुन धरन नख-जाति जगमगति, ललित करति पाई पैजा नियाँ ।²⁶⁷

Thus, Surdas has referred to it quite frequently in his Sur Sagar, while, describing the child-Krishna :

— — — — — , पग पैजनि बाजे ।²⁶⁸

The anklet or 'Paijani' has also been referred to as 'Nupur' :

— — — — — । नूपुर चारु मधुर लकारी ।²⁶⁹

We have also got a reference of 'Ghungaru' that served the same purpose of an anklet :

प्रेम राहित पग बाँधि घुँघरु सक्यो न अंग नचाइ ।²⁷⁰

267. Sur Sagar, I, p.297, v.724; Nanddas, p.233, v.100; And, Sujan Raskhan, p.20, v.15.

268. Sur Sagar, I, p.301, v.735; p.305, v.750; p.312, v.769, p.324 v.802 Etc.

269. Manas, p.991, v.75.4; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.294, v.715; p.300, v.732 Etc; And, II, p.9, v.2409; p.62, v.2675 & p.63, v.2679 Etc; And, Mahakavi Chandidas Padavali, p.12.

270. Sur Sagar, I, p.51, v.155.

The children also wore necklaces, generally, known as 'Mal' or 'Mala' :

छिटकि रहीं चहुँ दिसि सु लहुनियाँ , लटकन-लटकनि माल की ।²⁷¹

These necklaces were also referred to as

'Har' :

उर शीबत्स रुचिर वनमाला । परिक हर भूषण मनिभाला ।²⁷²

The necklaces were, generally of gold, but, also, of precious- stones sometimes. For example, we have references of 'Mani-Har' :

उर मनिहार पदिक की सोभा । - - - - -²⁷³

271. Sur Sagar, I, p.297, v.723; Manas, p.144, v.146.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.50-51, v.153; p.160, v.417; pp.308-309, v.757.

272. Manas, p.144, v.146.3; Sur Sagar, I, p.207, v.508; pp.262-263, v.634- refers to the golden necklace or 'कंचन हार' pp.265-267, v.642; p.293, v.712; p.528, v.1397; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.54, v.2626, 2627 & 2630.

273. Manas, p.189, v.198.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.293, v.712;

We also get references of the pearl-necklaces or 'Mal Motin ki'²⁷⁴ or 'Motin Har'²⁷⁵, as well as, 'Banmala',²⁷⁶ which was, most probably, the flower-necklace.

We also have references of 'Tigers-Teeth' studded in gold, and suspended by a chain, beautifying the neck and chest of the children. These were known as 'keharinakh' or simply 'Hari Nakh' :

- - - - - । हिये हरि नख अति सोभा ररी ।²⁷⁷

These tiger-teeths were actually, 'baghnakh' or 'bagnah':

कतुला कंठ बघनहा नीके । - - - - -²⁷⁸

Similarly, a pendant was also worn by children, on the fore-head and, this has been referred to as 'Laturi' in the Medieval Hindi literature :

लटकति ललित लताट लदूरी । - - - - -²⁷⁹

274. Sur Sagar, I, p.438, v.1130; p.482, v.1243; p.494, v.1282 Etc; Also, Barbosa, p.104.

275. Sur Sagar, I, pp.619-620, v.1661; p.792, v.2158, Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.2, v.2373; p.3, v.2431, p.9, v.2409 Etc.

276. Manas, p.144, v.146.3, Sur Sagar, I, p.482, v.1242; pp.493-494, v.1280; p.637, v.1707; Sur Sagar, II, p.2, v.2372; p.7, v.2398; pp.30-31, v.2505; p.63, v.2680 & p.79, v.2757 Etc.

277. Manas, p.189, v.198.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.296-297, v.722 & v.724 Etc. For 'keharinakh', Sur Sagar, I, p.294, v.715; p.302, v.789, p.306, v.751; p.318, v.788 Etc.

278. Sur Sagar, I, p.301, v.735.

279. Ibid; Also, p.303, v.742; p.306, v.752; p.324, v.802 Etc.

The ears of both the sexes were pierced thrugh at avery tender age and, by the constant wearing of the ear-ornaments, the pierced holes grew wider and wider with age.²⁸⁰ The ornaments of the ears were generally, ear-rings of different shapes.²⁸¹ These have been referred to as 'Kundals' :

कुंक्ष मकर मुकुट सिर भाजा । - - - - - 282

Thus, we find many references of 'Kundal' in Sur Sagar, as Surdas has described vividly the ornaments of child-Krishna :

कनक - मणि - मय-जटित- कुंक्ष- ज्योति जगमग करनि ।²⁸³

Those who could not afford gold and precious stones for their ear-rings, used those of silver or brass ones.²⁸⁴

280. Terry in Early Travels, p.323; Storia, III, p.40.

281. Manas, p.144, v.146.3 for fish-shaped kundal; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.436-437, v.1125; pp.482-483, v.1244, v.1246; Also, II, pp.30-31, v.2505;

282. Ibid; Sur Sagar, I, p.23, v.69; p.101, v.307; p.479, v.1234 Etc. pp.650-651, v.1754 Etc; Also, II, p.2, v.2372, p.12, v.2419; p.96, v.2839 Etc.

283. Sur Sagar, I, p.377, v.969 & v.970; pp.452-453, v.1181; v.1184; p.483, v.1245; p.619, v.1659; pp.685-686, v.1822 Etc. Also, II, p.2, v.2374; pp.6-7, v.2395; p.10, v.2412; p.27, v.2486; pp.30-31, v.2505 Etc.

284. Terry in Early Travels, p.323; Also, Storia, III, p.40.

The waist of the children was always encircled by a chain, which was known as 'Kati Kinnkini' :

चारें घुट मनि रचित बनाई । कटि किंकिनि कल सुहर सुहाई ।²⁸⁵

We also find the reference of waist-chain in Sur Sagar of Surdas :

कनक रतन-मनि-जटित-रचित कटि किंकिनि कुम्भित पल्लवपटनिया²⁸⁶ ।

Thus, as is evident from above, the children of wealthy parents, wore the waist-chains of gold, studded with precious stones.²⁸⁷

The waist-chain -ordinarily of gold, has been referred to as 'Kardhani' :

तनक कटि पर कनक करधनि , छीन छवि चम्कति ।²⁸⁸

285. Manas, p.991, v.75.4; Also Samuel Purchas' India, p.76.

286. Sur Sagar, I, p.297, v.724; Also, p.294, v.715; pp.296-297, v.722; p.301, v.735; pp.650-651, v.1754 Etc; Also, II, pp.30-31, v.2505;

287. Sur Sagar, I, p.297, v.724; Also, p.312, v.769; p.321, v.797; Also, II, p.77, v.2749; And, pp.139-140, v.3067 Etc.

288. Sur Sagar, I, p.324, v.802.

Just as the women wore bands or bangles on the-ir wrists, the children, too, were adorned with wrist-chains or bonds, known as 'Panhuchi' :

- - - - - , पहुँची रतन जराह ।²⁸⁹

Similarly, bracelets were also worn above the elbow, and these were known as 'Bajuband'.²⁹⁰ Sometimes, the nose of the boys were also pierced and they, too, wore the nose-ring or 'Nathuni' :

मोतिनि सहित नासिका नथुनी , - - - - -²⁹¹

Though, not, generally, but, we do have a reference of the children wearing rings in the fingers too :

पल्लव हस्त मुद्रिका भ्राजे । - - - - -²⁹²

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289. Sur Sagar, I, p.306, v.751; p.301, v.735; p.297, v.724; p.294, v.715; Also, Manas, p.189, v.198.3; & p.144, v.146.4.
290. Sur Sagar, I, pp.296-297, v.722; p.792, v.2158; Also, Manas, p.144, v.146.4.
291. Sur Sagar, I, p.297, v.723; pp.685-686, v.1822; Also, II, p.57, v.2645.
292. Sur Sagar, I, p.482, v.1243; Also, p.294, v.715.

Crowns or 'Mukut', made of gold or studded with precious stones²⁹³ were worn by the royal princes or those of the wealthier sections :

कुँहल मकर मुकुट सिर भाजा । - - - - - ²⁹⁴

It has been referred to by Surdas in his Sur Sagar too:

सुरती - मुकुट- पिताबेर दे मोहिँ ते आई महतारी ।

मुकुट छरयो सिर , - - - - - ²⁹⁵ ॥

It appears that, in the Medieval period, the crowns either made of, or studded with peacock's feathers became more popular²⁹⁶

मोर- मुकुट बनमात बिराजत , - - - - - ²⁹⁷

293. PrithviRaj Raso, II, Samay 23, p.670, Doha 169; 'Revant Giri Rasu' of Vijai-Sen Suri in 'Ras Aur Rasanvayee Kavya', p.108, Chhand 3; Narsai Mahtena Pad p.14, Pad 22, Doha 3; 'Kanhar-De'-Prabandh', p.20.

294. Manas, p.144, v.146.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.23, v.69;

295. Sur Sagar, I, p.573, v.1343; Also, II, pp.62-63, v.2676 & 2679; p.79, v.2757; p.96, v.2839; p.379, v.4075 & 4077 Etc.

296. Indian Jewellery, pp.10-11.

297. Sur Sagar, I, p.431, v.1111; pp.436-437; v.1125; p.453, v.1182; p.482, v.1242; p.527, v.1393; p.637, v.1707; p.735, v.1986; p.750, v.2031; Also, II, p.2, v.2372 & p.10, v.2412 Etc.

MEN'S ORNAMENTS :

The men of the royal families and wealthier sections, generally, adorned themselves with ornaments.²⁹⁸ of these, we generally, have reference of crowns²⁹⁹ with even some feathers of birds plumed into it.³⁰⁰

The men, especially the Rajputs, considered it a mark of dignity and nobility to put-on ear-rings.³⁰¹ Moreover, we already know that, the ears of boys, too, were pierced at a very tender age and they wore ear-rings in them.³⁰²

कुंदर कान मटुक सिर सोहह कर कटार सोन मूँठि ।³⁰³

Thus, the ear-rings were known as 'kundars' or 'Kundals' and were often studded with precious - stones or 'nag' :

कुंदल स्त्रवन देर नग लरई । - - - - -³⁰⁴

298. Indian Jewellery, pp.10-11.
299. Sur Sagar, II, pp.62-63, v.2676; v.2679; p.79, v.2757; p.96, v.2839; p.379, v.4075 & 4077; Also, Padmavat, p.47, v.47; And, Mrigavati, pp.206-207, v.243; And, Narsai Mahtana Pad, p.14, Pad 22, Doha 3.
300. Sur Sagar, I, pp.735-736, v.1987; p.750, v.2031; Also, II, p.2, v.2372 and p.10, v.2412; Also; Sir Thomas Roe's description of Emperor Jahangir on his birthday cited in Indian Jewellery, pp.10-11.
301. Indian History Congress (Proceedings), 1938, p.346; K.M. Ashraf, p.216.
302. Terry in Early Travels (Foster), p.323; Storia, III, p.40; Also, Ain, II, p.126; Al-beruni (ab.) p.87; Barbosa, I, p.113.
303. Mrigavati, pp.206-207, v.243.
304. Padmavat, pp.397-398, v.392; Sur Sagar, I, pp.685-686, v.1822; pp.736-737, v.1990; Also, Kavita-vali, p.3; And, Chaitnya Bhagwat, p.94.

There are many references of ear-rings worn by men in Surdas's 'Sur Sagar' :

मोर- सुकुट स्त्रवननि मनि - कुंल, - - - - - 305

Or

अति - सुंदर, कुण्डल स्त्रवननि वर , सुंदर झलकनि रीझत काम ।³⁰⁶

The Kundals made in flower's shape was known as 'Karn-Phool'. Though worn, generally, by the women, it was, also, at times, adorned by the men in Medieval India :

काननिह कनक फूल छवि देही । चितवत चितहिं चोरि जनु लेही ।³⁰⁷

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305. Sur Sagar, I, p.496, v. 1288; p.621, v. 1665 & v.1667; p.653, v.1761; p.735, v.1986; p.750, v.2031; Also, II, p.2, v.2372 & 2374; p.6, v.2369; pp.6-7, v.2395; p.10, v.2412; p.12, v.2419 Etc. Also, 'Meera Bai ki Padavali, p.101, v.2.
306. Sur Sagar, II, p.18, v.2443; p.27, v.2486; pp.30-31, v.2505; Also, p.96, v.2839; And, p.351, v.3932; p.381, v.4085 Etc.; And, Also, Ain (J & S.), III, p.342.
307. Manas, p.207, v.218.4.

Men, in the Medieval period also wore necklace, to adorn their necks too- just like the women but, not that regularly : Thus, it was considered to be a big reward, if someone was given a necklace studded with the precious-stones :

तोहि तैं तीर घाट जौ पावौ । नवगिरही टोहर पहिरावौ ।³⁰⁹

It has been referred to as 'Mala' or 'Har' by Surdas :

दुलरी ग्रीव मात मोतिनि की, तै के-झूर भुज स्याम निहारति ।³¹⁰

Tulsidas also refers to it, as worn by men :

उर श्रीवत्स रुचिर बनमाला । पदिक हार भूषन मनिजाता ।³¹¹

308. E. & D., II, p.26; Tarikh-i-Ferista, I, p.41; Also, 'Bahubali Ras', in 'Ras Aur Rasanavyi Kavya', p.67, v.67; for a description of Jahangir's necklace by Sir Thomas Roe; Indian Jewellery, pp.10-11. And, Bernier, p.268.

309. Padmavat, pp.397-398, v.392; Kavita-vali, p.8, v.2.

310. Sur Sagar, I, p.438, v.1130; p.482, v.1243; p.486, v.1255; p.494, v.1282. pp.735-736, v.1987 Etc.

311. Manas, p.144, v.146.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.482 v.1242; pp.493-494, v.1280; p.637, v.1707; And, II, p.6, v.2369; pp.30-31, v.2505; p.63, v.2680; p.79, v.2757 Etc.

The Rajputs especially, considered it a symbol of noble birth, to wear bracelets at their elbows ³¹²

----- , बाजू बंद , सोभा भुवनि अपार । ³¹³

They also wore armlets just like the women's wrist-bands ³¹⁴
and, also rings on their fingers of their hands ³¹⁵

तब देखी मुद्रिका मनोहर । राम नाम अंकित अति सुंदर । ³¹⁶

Moreover, we have a reference of the use of 'Mekhla' ³¹⁷
or the girdle of the waist. It appears that some men in the
medieval period did adorn these too.

312. Indian History Congress (Proceedings), 1938, p.346;
Sir Thomas Roe describes Jahangir on his birthday,
wearing 'armlets set with diamonds on his elbows'
Indian Jewellery, pp.10-11; Also, Meera-Sudha Sindhu,
p.485, v.50, & p.530, v.63.
313. Sur Sagar, II, pp.172-173, v.3228; Manas, p.144, v.146.3;
Also, Barbosa, I, p.104; And, Sachau, I, p.181.
314. Barbosa, I, p.104; Sachau, I, p.181; Sur Sagar, p.297, v.724;
Indian Jewellery, op.cit; pp.10-11;
315. Sachau, I, p.181; Indian Jewellery, Op.Cit, pp.10-11;
Also, Barbosa, I, p.113.
316. Manas, p.726, v.12.1, & v.12; Sur Sagar, I, pp.209-210
v.516; pp.210-211, v.518; p.220, v.534 Etc; Kavitt Ratnakar,
p.61, II Tarang, Chhand 55; Ain, III (J & S), p.342; Meera-
Sudha-Sindhu, p.185, v.72; Nanak Vani, p.273; Thevenot,
p.53 & Pyrard, I, p.372.
317. Kabir Bachnavali, & 40, v.393; Narsai Mahte 'na Pad, p.85,
v.142; Barbosa, I, p.113; And, Also, K.M. Ashraf, pp.216-217.

The rest of the men's ornaments, if, at all, they may be so called, consisted of swords, daggers and weapons.³¹⁸ While, describing the ornaments of a king or princes even, we, generally, find a reference of the weapons :

कुंडर कान मटुक सिर सोहत कर कटार सोन मूँति ³¹⁹ ।

OR ;

पीत बसन परिकर कटि भाथा । चारु चाप सर सोहत हाथा ॥

तन अनुहरत सुचंदन खोरी । स्वामल गौर मनोहर जोरी ॥ ³²⁰

318. 'Dharm-Mangal' (by Ghanaram Chakravarty) p.224;
Ain (J & S) III,p.34;P.N. Chopra,Glimpses of Social
life,p.16; Bisal Deo Raso,p.139,v.96.

319. Mrigaveti,pp.206-207,v.243;Also,pp.352 -353,v.408&409

320. Manas, p.207,v.218.2;Also,p.144,v.146.4;Also,Kavita-
vali,p.10,v.7.

Women's Ornaments :-

The Indian women has always been anxious to adorn-even load herself with a large variety of bulky ornaments.³²¹ There was no departure from this traditional custom during the Mughal period.³²² Moreover, adorning themselves with various ornaments, to look wore charming and attractive³²³ was "the very joy of their hearts".³²⁴ They would deny themselves other necessities but would not forego ornaments, till, unfortunately, they became widows.³²⁵

In Medieval Indian, there were twelve standard ornaments, one for each part of the body from head to foot (Nakh Shikh).³²⁶ They were Nupur, Kinkin, Kalava, Anguthi, kanken, Angad, Har, Kanthashri, Besar, Khnt, Tika and Shishphul.³²⁷

321. R. Misra, p.125; P.N. Chopra, Society and Culture, p.14;
Rothfed's women of India, pp.189-194.

322. Ibid; Also, Ovington, p.320.

323. R. Misra, p.125.

324. Ovington, p.320; Also, 'First Englishmen In India, p.76;
And, Storia, III, p.40.

325. Storia, III, p.40; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.14.

326. Padmavat, pp.96-115, v.99-118 & p.291, v.300; Also,
R. Misra, p.125 ; A.P. Mathur, p.131. Mrigavati, p.193, v.228;
And, Sur Sagar, I, p.792, v.2158.

327. Ibid; Also, Padmavat, pp.287-291, v.296-300.

Abdul Fazl, the court-historian of Akbar, has enumerated the most popular ornaments in his Ain-i-Akbari. They were Shishphul, Mang, Kotbildar, Sekra, Binduli, khuntila, Karnphul, Dur Bachh, Pipal Patti, Champakali, Mor bharwar, Bisur, Phuli, Laung, Nath, Guluband, Har, Hans, kangan, Gajrah, Jame, Chur, Bahu, churin, Bajuband, Tad, Anguthi, Chuddar kantika, kati Mekhla, Jehar Pail, Bhank, Bichhwa and Anwat.³²⁸

In enumerating the various ornaments of the body, let us start from the head downwards. To begin with, the 'Shishphool' crowned the head :

- - - - - , सीसफूल सिर धारति ।।³²⁹
Or,

सीसफूल, मनि नाग सीस धरि, मनु सुहाग को छत्र तनायो ।³³⁰

It has also been referred to, as 'Churamani'.³³¹

328. Ain, III, pp. 312-314; Also, R. Misra, pp. 125-126; P.N. Chopra, Some aspects of North Indian Social life, pp. 49-55.

329. Sur Sagar, I, p. 780, v. 2116; Also, II, p. 89, v. 2807;

330. Sur Sagar, II, p. 171, v. 3229; Also, pp. 175-176, v. 3246; Ain, III, p. 312.

331. Ram Chandrika, p. 70, v. 10

It was either a single diamond studded in gold or, it took the form of a small tringular tiara.³³² Moreover, in Rajputana, it was called 'Rakhri'.³³³ It was like marigold, raised, bell- shaped and hollow.³³⁴

The parting of the hair known as 'Mang' was decorated with a string of pearls :

मोतिनि मांग सँवारि पृथमही , - - - - - 335

And, sometimes, it was decorated with precious- stones and jewels :

सिरे जो रतन मांग बैसारा । जानहुँ गगन दूट ते तारा । ³³⁶

332. Ram Chandrika, p.70, v.10; Also, A.P. Mathur, p.131.

333. Ram Chandrika, p.193, v.7; Also, Meera Mandakini, p.40, v.89; And, Meera Madhuri, p.118, v.329.

334. R. Misra, p.126.

335. Sur Sagar, II, p.57, v.2645 & p.74, v.2735 & v. 2736; Also, Mrigavati, p.40, v.50 And p.215, v.253. And, Ram Chandrika, p.193, v.8 & v.9.

336. Padmavat, p.288, v.297; Also, Meera-Sudha Sindhu, p.183, v.68. And Sur Sagar, II, p.74, v.2735 and v.2736.

Suspended from this parting of hair or 'Mang', on the forehead was another ornament called 'Kotbildar'³³⁷ it consisted of a string of pearls, with a long centre drop.³³⁸ In Rajputana, it was known as 'Tika',³³⁹ 'Binduli' was another ornament for the forehead and, it was also called 'Bandan' or 'Bendi'.³⁴⁰

A number of ornaments were worn in the ears. The most common of these was the ordinary ear-ring or 'Kundal':
 स्त्रवन सीप दुह दीप सँवारे । कुँडल कमक रचे उँजिआरे ।
 मनि कुँडल चमकहिं अति लोने । जनु कौँधा लौकहिं दुहुँ कोने ।³⁴¹

337. Ain, II, p. 312.

338. Manucci, Vol. II, pp. 339-340; Also, R. Misra, p. 126; And, Ovington, p. 320.

339. Sur Sagar, I, p. 780, v. 2116; p. 792, v. 2158; Also, II, p. 57, v. 2645; p. 74, v. 2736. Mrigavati, p. 41, v. 52; Ram Chandrika, p. 196, v. 14; And Bihari Satsai, p. 105, v. 106.

340. Sur Sagar, I, p. 792, v. 2158; Also, II, pp. 175-176, v. 2628; Roop Manjari, pp. 6-7; Padmavat, pp. 405-406, v. 400.

341. Padmavat, p. 107, v. 110; p. 288, v. 297; pp. 397-398, v. 392; pp. 497-498, v. 479; Also, Kaharanama, p. 90; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p. 12, v. 2419; p. 96, v. 2839; Geetavali, pp. 169-170, v. 108; And, Vidyapatiki Padwali, p. 277, Pad 171, Doha 2; And, Fitch, p. 23.

A little above the ear-rings, small rings were,
generally, put on :

तेहि पर सँट दीप दुइ बारे । । दुइ धुव दुओ सँट बेसरे । ³⁴²

These were known as 'khunt' or 'khunti' as is evident
from the above verse.

Similarly, we have a reference of 'Karnphool'
as an ornament for the ear, which was shaped like flower
of Mangrel :

भाति सुतिम कल करन विभूषन । जगहिल हेतु बिमल बिभु पूजन । ³⁴³

342. Padnavat, p.107, v.110; Also, p.287, v.296; pp.497, 498,
v.479; Biheri Satsai, p.573; And, Chandayan, p.124,
Chhand 266, Doha 2 & p.131, chhand 9, Doha 2; And,
Also, Varn-Ratnakar, pp.4 & 46.

343. Manas, p.27, v.19.3 & p.786, v.12.3; Chitravali, p.106;
Meera Mandakini, p.40, v.89; Vidyapati ki Padavali,
p.261, v.163; And, Sur Sagar, I, p.792, v.2158; Also, II,
p.89, v. 2807 & 2808; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.792, v.2158;
Also, II, p.89, v.2807 & 2808; Also; pp.170-171, v.3228.

We also have evidence of 'Jhumkas',³⁴⁴ made of gold, weighed down the lobes of the ears. Sometimes, just a small circlet was worn. This was known as 'Bali'.³⁴⁵ Another ornament of the ear, was crescent-shaped and, known as 'Pipal Patti' or 'khumbhi'.³⁴⁶ If, in the shape of a peacock, it was known as 'Mor Bharwar',³⁴⁷ and, 'Makrakrat', if, in the shape of a fish.³⁴⁸ We, also have a reference of 'Mundra' or 'Mudra', which was worn by ascetics or Jogis in their ears.³⁴⁹

Women also wore ornaments in the nose. They had their nostrils pierced and wore wrings in them.³⁵⁰

344. Sur Sagar, I, pp.274-275, v.40; Also, Meera-Sudha Sindhu, p.479, Pad. 29 & p.486, Pad 50, Doha 7; Terry in Early Travels (Foster) p.309.

345. Padmavat, pp.316-317, v.318; Mahakavi Chandidas Padavali, p.90. Also, Pietra Della Valle, I, p.45; Terry in Early Travels (Foster), p.309.

346. Padmavat, p.107, v.110; Also, R. Misra, p.126.

347. R. Misra, p.126.

348. Sur Sagar, I, p.687, v. 1825; Also, II, pp.30-31, v.2505.

349. Padmavat, pp.121-122, v.126 and, p.262, v.276.

350. Terry in Early Travels (Foster), p.309; De Laet, p.81; Thevenot, p.53; Careri, p.248; Hamilton, I, p.163; And, Stavornius, I, p.415; R. Misra, p.126.

A circular ring made of very fine gold, with jewels studded in it used to hang from the nose- this was known as 'Nath' or 'Nathuniya'.³⁵¹ It was also flower- shaped.³⁵² But, this seemed to be of a bigger circumference and,so, just a small straight pin known as 'seenk' was worn :

तनिक सी नाक नथुनिया , मित हित नीक ।

कहत नाक पहिरावहु , चित दे सीक ॥ ³⁵³

It was not just a straight piece always. Sometimes, it was in the shape of clove and therefore, known as 'Long'.³⁵⁴

We also have references of another smaller, but, thicker ring studded with jewels known as 'Be'sar' :

बदन अग छूट तस भेटी । बेसरि दूटि तिलक गा भेटी ³⁵⁵

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351. Thevenot, p.37; De laet, p.81; Mandelslo,p.50; Sur Sagar,I,p.297,v.723; pp.685-686, v.1822; Also, II, p.57,v.2645. Padmavat,p.14,v.15; Also, Roop Manjari, p.6; And Bihari Satsai, p.306. Also, Meera-Sudha-Sindhu, p.478, Pad 29, Doha 4; 7,p.486,Pad 50,Doha 6.
352. Padmavat, pp.287-288,v.296; pp. 289-290, v.298; & pp.493-494,v.475. Also, Chhitai-varta,p.18,v.173; Chhandayan,p.131,Chhand 95,Doha 3.
353. Rahiman vilas,p.44,v.25; Also, Bihari Satsai,p.143. Also, Peter Mundy, II, p.192.
354. Bihari Satsai ,p.685; Kavitt Ratnakar,p.12,v.37;And, Ain,III,pp.312-314.
355. Padmavat,pp.316-317,v.318; Kaharanama,p.90 : 'बेसर नाक दिऐ मनआरी ;Meera Mandakini,p.40,v.89; Parshishta Nanddas, ,p.416,v.150;Bihari Satsai,p.706; Vidyapatiki Padavali,p.261,v.162; And, Narsai Mahtena Pad,p.11, pad 16, Doha 3.

Women in Medieval India, also adorned their necks with the ornaments.³⁵⁶ Another form of necklace called 'har' was, generally, a string of pearls, interconnected by golden roses which came down almost to the stomach. Its centre contained a pendant made of diamonds or others precious stones :

का बरनों अभरन उर हारा । ससि पहिरें नखतन्ह के मारा ।
चोर चारु औ चंदन चोला । हीर हार नाग ताग अमोला ।
तिन्ह झाँपी रोमावलि कारी । - - - - - - - - - 357

Surdas has described it as 'Har', as well as 'Mala' in his Sur Sagar.³⁵⁸ 'Guluband' was another ornament, which was tightly fitted round the neck.³⁵⁹ It, generally, consisted

356. Terry in Early Travels (Foster), p.309; Also, Manucci, III, p.40; Arms and Jewellery of the Indian Mughals, p.132; Bengal In the 16th Century, p.184.
357. Padmavat, p.290, v.299; Also, pp.316-317, v.318; And, pp. 63-65, verses, 63-65; Meera Mandakini, p.40, v.69; Bihari Satsai, pp.339 & 544; Rahiman vilas, p.10, v.90, p.44, v.28, p.57, v.83; Kaharanama, p.90; Ain, III, p.313; And, Storia, II, pp.339-340.
358. Sur Sagar, I, p.483, v.1246; pp.485-486, v.1253; pp.486-487, v.1256; p.502, v.1307; pp.685-686, v.1822; And, p.742, v.2008; Also, II, p.6, v.2369; p.11, v.2418; p.27, v.2488; pp.62-63, v.2676; p.140, v.3068; pp.170-171, v.3228; pp.185-186, v.3299; p.357, v.3933. Also, Madhu Malti, p.133, Vidya Pati Ki Padavali, p.45, pad 24, Doha 4. Also, Kaharanama, p.91; And, Rahiman vilas, p.29, v.7; p.50, v.74.
359. Bihari Satsai, p.440; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.25, v.79; Pyrard, I, p.380; R. Misra, p.127.

of five or seven rose - shaped buttons of gold - strings

³⁶⁰
or silk. It was also called 'Kanthisiri' :

कंठसिरी मुकुताहल माला सोहे अभरन गीव ³⁶¹ ।

Other forms of necklaces were 'Hansa',³⁶² 'Kanthi' or
Kantha,³⁶³ and, 'Hamel'.

और हार चौकी हमेल अब तरें कंठ न नेहौ ³⁶⁴ ।।

The 'Hamel' was also called 'Humel' :

सुभग हमेल कटाव की , - - - - - ³⁶⁵ ।।

Arms without ornaments were considered a bad
omen in Medieval India.³⁶⁶ The upper part of the arm
above the elbow was ornamented by an armlet called
'Bazuband' ;

- - - - - भुज बाहुबंद सोहत ³⁶⁷ ।

360. Bihari Satsai, p.440; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.25, v.79;
Pyrard, I, p.380; R. Misra, p.127.

361. Padmavat, pp.107-108, v.111; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.73,
v.2732; And, pp.170-171, v.3228. And, Sur Sagar, I,
p.792, v.2158.

362. Chandayan, p.285, Chhand 359, Doha 2; Arms and
Jewellery of the Indian Mughals (Abdul Aziz), p.132;
R. Misra, p.127.

363. Madhu Malti, p.396, v. 451; Chhitaivarta, p.65, v.404;
Abdul Aziz, Op.Cit; p.132; And, R. Misra, p.127.

364. Sur Sagar, II, p.47, v.2593; Also, p.79, v.2755;

365. Sur Sagar, I, p.792, v.2158.

366. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.16; Also, R. Misra, p.127

367. Sur Sagar, I, p.780, v.2116; Also, p.792, v.2158; Also, II,
pp.170-171, v.3228. Also, Padmavat, p.290, v.299; Also,
pp.316-317, v.316; Meera Madhuri, p.52, Pad 133; And, Narsai
Mahtena Pad, p.124, v.219. 368 Storia, II, p.340.

The 'bazuband' was usually two-inches wide, inlaid with diamonds, jewels etc. with a bunch of pearls hung down.³⁶⁸ 'Tad' or 'Toda' was a hollow circle worn on the arm, just below the 'bazuband' :

बाँह-ह बाँहू टाड सलोनी । - - - - -³⁶⁹

'Gajrah', a bracelet made of gold or pearls and studded with jewels, adorned their wrists.

रत्नवटित गजरा , बाजूबंद , सोभा मुशनि अपार ।³⁷⁰

The bracelets simply of gold have been referred to as

'kankan' or 'Kangan' :

बारी टाड सलोनी दूटी । बाँहू कंगन कलाई दूटी ।³⁷¹

368. Storia, II, p.340.

370. Sur Sagar, II, pp.170-171, v.3228.

371. Padmavat, pp.316-317, v.318; Also, pp.37-38, v.37; pp.108-109, v.112; pp.465, v.451; Also, Sur Sagar, p.207, v.508; Mrigavati, p.203, v.239; Meera-Sudha Sindhu, p.323, Pad.8; And, Varn Ratnakar, p.4.

For kankan : 'Nath Siddhiyon ki Vanian', p.26, vani; 152; Sur Sagar, I, p.361, v.917; pp.650-651, v.1754; p.682, v.1812 & p.792, v.2158; Manas, p.215, v.229.1; 'कंकन किंकनि नूपुर मुनि मुनि'..... Also, p.289, v.317.2; And, p.293, v.321.5.

Another ornament, known as 'Pahunchi' was worn in the wrists.³⁷² 'Chura' was also an ornament for the adornment of the wrists.³⁷³ Various types of bangles or 'Churis' were also worn :

----- , कर चुरी अनकर ।³⁷⁴

Similarly, we have a reference of another ornament which was worn in the arm was 'Bahuti' :

----- , भुजा बहूटनि , बलम संग को ।³⁷⁵

372. Sur Sagar, I, p.294, v. 715; Also, KavitaVali, p.8, v.2;

373 . Sur Sagar, I, pp.291-292, v.707; Kabir Granthavali, pp.224-225, v. 138, ChitraVali, p.93; Padmavat, pp.108-109, v.112, Meera Mandakini, p.40, v.89; And, Tuzuk (R.&B.), I, p.375; Mrigavati, p.203, v.239;

374. Sur Sagar, I, pp.619-620, v.1661; p.625, v.1676; p.780, v.2116; Bihari Satsai, p.712; First Englishmen In India, p.76; Pyard, I, p.377. Madhu Malti (Varanasi Edu.), p.42; Vidyapati ki Padavali, p.67, Pad 38, Doha 8; Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.597, v.64; p.676, v.305. And, Padmavat, pp. 128-129, v.133.

375. Sur Sagar, I, p.771, v.2993; Also, p.792, v.2158; 'Sri Krishna Kirtan' (of Baruchandidas) p.53.

In the fingers of the hand, simple rings or 'Chhalla'³⁷⁶ or 'Chakr'³⁷⁷ were put on. Generally, the Indian women covered almost all of their fingers with rings in the Medieval period. The wealthier of them studded them with jewels and precious stones. These were known as 'Anguthi' :

औ पहिरे नग जरी अँगूठी । - - - - - ³⁷⁸

This Anguthi has also been referred as 'Mundri' in the contemporary Hingi literature :

मणि - जटित रसीली माधुरी मुँदरी की ।। ³⁷⁹

On the right thumb 'Arsi' (mirror) was worn. It was a ring mounted with a little mirror having pearls round it. ³⁸⁰

376. Bihari Satsai, p.338; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.48, v.55; Sujan Raskhan p.35, v.91; Also, Barbosa, I, p.113.

377. Padmavat, pp.121-122, v.126.

378. Ibid, pp.108-109, v.112; pp.501, v.482; 'कनक अँगूठी औ नग जरी। Also, Meera-Sudha Sindhu, p.622, v.138; Narsai Mahtena Pad, p.12, Pad 17; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.48, v.55.

379. Rahiman vilas, p.66, v.3; Also, Kabir Vachnavali, p.166, Sakhi, 172; Madhu Malti, p.114, v.136; Sri Krishna Kirtan (of Barnchandidas), p.156; Also Bihari Satsai, p.41; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.48, v.55;

380. Manas, p.303, Chhand 3 After, the verse 326. Rahiman Vilas, p.49, v.72; Also, Bihari Satsai, p.572, v.583; Sujan Sagar, p.86, v.106; Kavitt Ratnakar, p.48, v.55; Vol. I, p.163; Theyenot, 53 and Manucci, Vol. II, p.340 also corroborates Hamilton, I, p.163.

Around their waists, the women wore 'Chhudra
Ghantika' that is, a golden belt with small bells :

छुद्र छटि मोहहि नर राजा । - - - - - 381

This was also known as 'kinkini' :

कंकन किकिनि नूपुर छुनि सुनि । - - - - - 382

Or, it was also called 'kati - kinkini' :

किकिनी कटि, कनित कंकन, कर छुरी हनकार । 383

We also have references of other ornaments of the waist.

These were, generally, golden belts with decoration; 384

and, were known as 'kati Mekhla' or 'Kardhani'. 385

381. Padmavat, p.112, v. 116; p.287, v. 296; p.290, v.299:
छुद्र छटि कटि कंकन तागा । " ; And, p.702,v.641;Also,Meera-
Madhuri,p.17,v.46; chhitai varta, p.101; And, Sur Sagar,
I,p.792, v.2158;

382. Manas, p.215, v.229.1; Also, p.289, v. 317.2; Also,
Padmavat,p.574,v.620. And, Vidyapatiki Padavali, p.26, Pad 13,
Doha 2 & p.277, Pad 171, Doha 2, Sur Sagar,I,p.682,v.1812:

तर कंकन - किकिनि- नूपुर - छुनि ---,p.742,v.2007;Also, Sur
Sagar,II,p.77,v.2749;pp.139-140,v.3067;p.173,v.3232 Etc.

383. Sur Sagar, I,pp.619-620,v.1661; p.623,v.1672;pp.650-651,
v.1754; Also, II, pp.30-31, v. 2505; pp.170-171,v.3228 &
pp.296-297, v.3680 Etc; Mrigavati,p.56,v.73; Meera- Sudha-
Sindhu, p.530,v.62; Srikrishna Kirtan', p.63. And, Roop
Manjari,p.5.

384. Ain, III, pp.313-314; Also, R. Misra, p.127.

385. Sur Sagar, I, p.324,v.802; Manas, p.289,v.317-2;
Padmavat,pp.290-291,v.299; Kabir Vachanavali,p.40,Sakhi,
393; Varn- Ratnakar,p.4; Narsai Mahteya Pad,p.125,Pad 222 &
Doha 5;

The women in Medieval India, also wore ornaments around their ankles. These were known as 'Painjani' :

चलत न पग-पैजनियाँ , मग अहटाय ॥³⁸⁶

The 'Painjani' has also been referred to as, 'Payal'³⁸⁷ or 'paijeb'.³⁸⁸

The ankle-ornament was also called 'Nupur' :

कंकन किंकिनि नूपुर बाजहिं । - - - - -³⁸⁹

Three gold rings called 'Jehari' or 'Jehar' also served as ankle ornaments :

बनजारी छुमकत चलत , जेहरि पहिरे पाइ ।

वाके जेहरि के सबद , बिरही जिम हर जाइ ॥³⁹⁰

-
386. Rahiman vilas, p.41,v.6; Sur Sagar,I,p.303;v.742; Also,II,p.62,v.2675 & p.63, v.2679;
387. Mrigavati,p.21,v.27; p.361,v.366;kaharanama,p.91; Also Mahari Vayasi' in Jayasi Granthavali, (Ashok Prakashan, New Delhi),p.697;'Visal Deo Raso', p.106, chhand 58; And, Padmavat,pp.114-115,v.118;pp.287-288,v.296 & pp.290-291,v.299.
388. Kaharnama,p.91; Also, Meera-Sudha-Sindhu,p.602,v.78. Also, Hamilton,I,p.163; Storia,II,p.340; Thomas Herbert's Travels,p.38.
389. Manas,p.289,v.317.2 & p.215,v.229.1 & p.991,v.75.4; Also, Sur Sagar,p.207,v.508; pp. 650-651, v.1754; p.682, v.1812,p.742, v. 2007,Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.530,v.62, Narsai Mahtena Pad,p.31,v.53; Kabir (Ed.H.P.Dwivedi); p.272,Pad ,67. Mrigavati,p.21,v.27;
390. Rahiman vilas, p.30,v.25; Also, Sur Sagar'-----पग नूपुर जेहरि , p. 792,v.2158.

'Ghungroo' , consisting of small gold bells, strung upon silk, were worn between the 'jehari' and 'Payal'.³⁹¹ Ordinarily, heavy silver bangles were used as anklets for the daily use.³⁹²

The fingers of the feet were also adorned with an ornament, known as 'Bichhiya' :

लाखन लखत बिछियावा , लखी सकाम ।।³⁹³

Rahim even refers to it, as 'Achhawa'.³⁹⁴ An-wat was the ornament to decorate the big toe :

अनवट बिछिया नखत तराई । - - - - -³⁹⁵

391. Sur Sagar, I, p.51, v.155; Mrigavati, p.72, Doha 17 (Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag Edn.); Gorakh Bani; p.87, v.3; Meera Sudha Sindhu, p.491, Pad 61; And, Ain, III, p.313; Mrigavati, p.21, v.27; p.316, v.366.

392. Rahiman vilas, p.51, v.82 : पापन केर कँगिया, डारेस कादि ।।
It was called Gujari in Rajasthan : Kavitt Ratnakar, p.49, v.58; And, Padmavat, pp.287-288, v.296 : औ पापन

पापनह अल चुरा । Thus, it has been referred to as 'chura' also; Even Kabirdas refers to the chura, Kabir Granthavali, pp.224-225, v.138.

393. Rahiman vilas, p.46, v. 41; Sur Sagar, I, p.792, v. 2158:
"- - बिछिया सब लेखी ।" And, Sur Sagar, II, p.83, v.2774;
Also, Kabir Granthavali, pp.224-225, v.138, And, Meera-Sudha- Sindhu, p.657, Pad 242: अनवट ऊपर बिछिया सोवे , Bihari Satsai, p.418.

394. Rahiman vilas, p.57, v. 81.

395. Padmavat, p.114, v.118, Meera-Sudha-Sindhu, p.657, Pad 242; Bihari Satsai, p.208; Raj Vilas, p.242; Also, Hamilt-on, I, p.164; And , Manucci, II, p.340.

The shoes have been referred to above, while, dismissing the dresses. It does not seem that, the shoes were dispensed with, on account of a large number of ornament worn on the feet, as asserted by the foreign travellers to India, during the Medieval period.³⁹⁶ We, as a matter of fact, find the Indian women wearing these ornaments alongwith sandals, shoes etc. even today.

These ornaments were, generally, made of gold³⁹⁷

396. Fitch in Early Travels (Foster), p.223; Ovington, p.320; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.16.

397. Padmavat, pp. 50-51, v.50; p.87, v.89, pp.164-165, v.172; pp.338-339, v.339; pp.390-391, v.384 Etc. Sur Sagar, I, p.15, v.43, p.38, v.116; p.58, v.177; p.75, v.230; p.101, v.307, pp.273-274, v.656; p.482, v.1243; p.502, v.1306 & v.1307; Also, II, p.6, v.2369; p.40, v.2555; p.89, v.2804; p.152, v.3129 Etc; And, Kabir Granthavali, pp.154-155, v.17.

and silver.³⁹⁸ They were often studded with pretty and precious jewels and stones, like diamond,³⁹⁹ pearls,⁴⁰⁰ amethyst⁴⁰¹ etc. We also have references of coral,⁴⁰² Neelam⁴⁰³ and Firoza⁴⁰⁴ used as stones in necklaces

398. Padmavat, pp.249-250, v.262; Hamilton, I, p.164; Fitch, p. 23.

399. Padmavat, pp.151-152, v.158; p. 170, v.177; p.495, v.477 Etc; 'Akhri Kalām; Jayasi Granthavali, pp.359-360, v.57; And, Sur Sagar, I, p.44, v.134; pp.273-274, v.656; pp.274-275, v. 658; p.289, v.702, Etc ; And, Kabir Granthavali, p.126, v.2(48); p.127, v.3(49);

400. Kabir Granthavali, pp.126-127, v.4 (48); p.127, v.2 (49); p.134, v.3(55). Also, Sur Sagar, p.332, v.828; p.337, v.843; pp.619-620, v.1661; Also, II, pp.27-28, v.2489; p.63, v.2679; p.157, v.3155 Etc. And, Padmavat, pp.120-121, v.125; pp.151-152, v.158; pp.288-289, v.297; Akhri Kalām, pp.357-358, v.51 & pp.359-360, v.57.

401. Sur Sagar, I, pp.273-274, v.656; pp.291-292, v.707; p.332, v.828; p.482, v.1243; pp.484-485, v.1250; Also, II, pp.30-31, v.2505; p.71, v.2724; pp.77-78, v.2750 Etc.; And Padmavat, pp.171-172, v.179; pp.172-173, v.180; p.192, v.201; pp.288-289, v.297; pp.494-495, v.476; Akhvat, Jayasi Granthavali, p.318, v.21; Akhri Kalām, Jayasi Granthavali, pp.357-358, v.51 & pp.359-360, v.57.

402. Padmavat, pp.120-121, v.125; And, pp.451-452, v.440.

403. Padmavat, p.495, v.477.

404. Manas, p.264, v.287.2.

and finger - rings etc. Women, who could not afford gold or silver, must have made use of metals like Copper⁴⁰⁵ and brass,⁴⁰⁶ since we have references to their use. They also made use of seeds, shells and flowers.⁴⁰⁷ Even glass was used for the same purpose.⁴⁰⁸ Ornaments made of ivory were gaining popularity in Medieval India.⁴⁰⁹

405. Padmavat, pp. 513-514, v. 493; Fitch, p. 109; And, R. Misra, p. 128 And Purchas, India, p. 10.

406. Kabir Granthavali, p. 61, v. 5 & 6 (17); Fitch, p. 109; and, R. Misra, p. 128.

407. Sujan Raskhan, p. 17, v. 3; Bihari Satsai, pp. 237, 248 & 252; Also, Mannucci, II, pp. 339-340; A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p. 136; R. Misra, p. 128 & kaumudi, p. 98.

408. Kabir Granthavali, p. 129, v. 8(50); Also, pp. 154-155, v. 17; Also, Purchas India, p. 10.

409. Thevenot, p. 12; Linschoten, II, p. 3; Hamilton, I, p. 129; Purchas, His Pilgrims, X, p. 93; & Fitch, pp. 13, & 23.

CHAPTER VI

CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES

In Medieval India, religion played an important part in the functioning of the society.¹ A person's social position was determined from birth.² And for every single action of the persons, there were religious sanctions and taboos. Thus, from the birth of a child to the death, various ceremonies and customs or rituals had to be undergone by them.³

As a matter of fact, purificatory rites of a Hindu begin before his birth.⁴ Of the sixteen principal ceremonies, prescribed by Hindu law-givers⁵, only a few of them and certain obituary rites were observed by the Hindus in the sixteenth century, north India.⁶

1. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.159.

2. Refer to Ch.I.

3. Refer f.n. 1.

4. R.B. Pandey, Hindu Sanskars, pp.79-104; P. Thomas, Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners, p.87; Also, G.F. Mazumdar, some Aspects of Indian Civilization;p.301.

5. R.B. Pandey, pp.79-480; P. Thomas, pp.87-96; G.F. Mazumdar, pp.295-408; Also, Abbe J.A. Dubois, pp.155-172;

6. R.B. Pandey, pp.407-480; G.F. Mazumdar, pp.367-408.

We have repeated references of the people's desire to have male child.⁷ And , the news of the boy's birth, spread joy all over. ⁸ The delivery was, generally, assisted by mid-wives or 'Dai'⁹, who, also, cut the umbilical cord¹⁰ and took expensive presents for the same like gold necklaces or golden bracelets.¹¹

First of all, the drummers etc. were called to play their drums and other musical instruments to mark the birth of the son. :

- - - - - । कहा बोलाइ बजावहु बाजा ।।¹²

The Brahmans were invited in the meantime, and first of all, they helped perform the 'Jatakarm' or birth ceremony :

नंदीमुख सराध करि जातकर्म सब कीन्ह ।¹³

-
7. Manas, p.180,v.188.1 & v.188.2; Also,Mrigavati,pp.9-11, verses,13-15.
 8. Manas, p.184,v.192.2; Mrigavati,p.11,v.15;And, Sur Sagar, I,pp.256-259,v.622;pp.261-262,v.631 & 632;
 9. Sur Sagar, I,pp.262-263,v.634;pp.274-275,v.658.
 10. Sur Sagar, I,pp.262-263,v.633,634.
 11. Ibid; Also, v.635.
 12. Manas,p.184,v.192.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I,p.263,v.637;And, Geetavali,pp.19-21,v.2.13.
 13. Ibid,v.193; Also, Geetavali,pp.19-21,v.2.7;pp.25-26, v.3.3.

Thus, 'Nandimukh Shraddha', was a ritual performed immediately after the child-birth.¹⁴ Offerings of gold, cows, clothes and jewels were made to the Brahmans after this ceremony was over.¹⁵ The horoscope of the child was also, invariably, got prepared soon after birth.¹⁶

As soon as the news of the child-birth spread in the neighbour-hood, women-friends and relations flocked to the house.¹⁷ The gardener's wife or 'Malin' fastened festoons of leaves (especially mango) and flowers on the doors and verandah.¹⁸ The sacred vessels or 'Mangal-Chat' or 'Kalash', was placed at the door :

कंधन कलस जगमों नग के । भागे सकल अमंगल जग के ।¹⁹

We also have references to the 'Mangal Thari' or 'Thali'.²⁰

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14. Manas, p.184, v.193; Geetavali, pp.27-28, v.4.5; Atkins, I, p.246; Growse, p.97, f.n.1; Pandey, p.123.
 15. Manas, p.184, v.193; Also, Growse, p.97.
 16. Manas, p.184, v.192.4, Mrigavati, p.11, v.15; And, Padmavat, p.72, v.73.
 17. Manas, p.184, v.193.2 Sur Sagar, I, pp.256-259, v.622; p.262, v.632; pp.265-267, v.642; pp.267, v.643 Etc ; Padavali, Nanddas, p.328.
 18. Sur Sagar, I, pp.265-267, v.642; pp.270-271, v.650; pp.274-275, v.658; Manas, p.184, v.193.1.
 19. Sur Sagar, I, pp.270-271, v.650; And, Manas, p.184, v.193.2. And, Padavali, Nanddas, p.330, v.53; Also, Geetavali, pp.25-26, v.3.5.
 20. Sur Sagar I, pp.270-271, v.650; Nand das, p.328; And, Geetavali, pp.25-26, v.3.4.

The women sang 'Mangal-Geet' or 'Sohilo' to celebrate the occasion.²¹ And, turmeric, vermillion etc. were mixed with curd, and sprinkled on those, who were present.²² The women-folk also performed 'Arti' of the child²³ and gifts were given to them, in return as 'Neochhawar' :

करि आरति नेवछावरि करहीं । - - - - - ।²⁴

They made certain auspicious designs on the floor of the house, especially where the birth ceremony was performed. This was known as 'Chowk' or 'Sathiya'.²⁵ There was no check on the gifts and presents exchanged to celebrate a son's birth.:²⁶

एकनि कौ गोदान समर्पत, एकनि कौ पहिरावत चीर ।

एकनि कौ भूषण पाटंबर, एकनि कौ जुतेत नग हीर ।²⁷

21. Manas, p.185, v.194; Sur Sagar, I, pp.256-259, v.622; p.262, v.632, p.268, v.645; p.271, v.651; It has been called 'Sohilo' also : Ibid, pp.274-275, v.658; And, Geetavali, pp.17-18, v.1.7; pp.19-21, v.2; pp.25-26, v.3.1.

22. Sur Sagar, I, p.263, v.637; pp.267-268, v.644; p.270, v.649.

23. Manas, p.185, v.193.3 & 193.4; Sur Sagar, I, pp.265-267, v.642; Also, Geetavali, pp.19-21, v.2.9.

24. Sur Sagar, I, pp.267-268, v.644 : चौक चंदन तीपि के, परि आरती सोंघे । Also, p.268, v.645 & pp.268-269, v.646 & 647.

25. Sur Sagar, I, pp.267-268, v.644 : दारु सथिया देति स्वामा, सात

26. Manas, p.185, v.193.4 & p.186, v.195-4; Sur Sagar, I, p.262, v.632; And, Geetavali, pp.27-28, v.4.8 : 'देत-नेव-पहिरत-पहिरावत पुजा प्रमोद - दारु सथिया'

27. Sur Sagar, I, p.267, v.643; p.272, v.653; pp.274-275, v.658 & 659. Geetavali, pp.19-21, v.2.21; & pp.27-28, v.4.

We, invariably, get the reference of the sixth-day ceremony or 'Chhathi' before the naming ceremony or 'Namkaran'.²⁸ As far as the sixth-day ceremony is concerned, we find that the ladies sang and danced the whole night. This was known as 'Ratjaga'.²⁹ On the sixth-day, as a matter of fact, the child was brought out of the confinement room. The gardener's wife or 'Malin', tied festoons of leaves and 'offered garlands of flowers, while, the goldsmith presented a necklace, studded with diamonds and pearls. The barber's wife applied 'Mahawar' of nine colours on the feet of the mother, while, the carpenter brought a cradle (in the case of wealthy men, it was of sandal-wood) for the newly-born."³⁰

28. Padmavat, pp. 52-53, v. 52 & 53; Geetavali, pp. 30-36, v. 5 & v. 6.

29. Padmavat, p. 52, v. 52; Geetavali, pp. 30-31, v. 5.3; And, Sur Sagar, pp. 274-275, v. 40.

30. Refer 1 & 2 above; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 658; And, p. 275, v. 659.

In fact, the child was given a good 'ubtan'-
followed by a bath :

बननी उबटि न्हाह के - - - - - 31

Everybody got dressed-up for celebrations in the evening.³²
Music parties were held and musical instruments played upon
by the professional musicians.³³ In the night, antimony or
'Kajal' was collected in a new earthen cup-butter-fat or
'Ghee' being used in the lamp to produce it. It was then
applied on child's eyes :

कादो कौरे कापरा ॥ अरु, कादो घी के मोन ।

काजर - रोटी आनहु ॥ मिलि ॥, करो छठी को चार ।³⁴

On the twelfth day of the birth, another function,
known as 'Barhin' or 'Barhon' was held.³⁵ Invitations were
extended to friends, relatives and other caste-members,

31. Sur Sagar, I, p. 276, v. 660.

32. Padmavat, p. 52, v. 52; Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 658
Also, Chitravali, p. 21, v. 53 & v. 54.

33. Ibid; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p. 264, v. 639, & v. 640; & pp. 268-269,
v. 645 & 646; And, Geetavali, pp. 30-31, v. 5.

34. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 274-275, v. 658;

35. Geetavali, pp. 27-28, v. 4.

for a feast, to welcome the addition to the family.³⁶ The deities were propitiated and , then, the invitees sat down for a sumptuous dinner.³⁷

The 'Namkaran' or naming ceremony generally, took place after the sixth³⁸ or the twelfth day.³⁹ At the time of the preparation of the horoscope, a name was also given to the child;⁴⁰ according to the Rasi, in which he or she was born.⁴¹

On the day fixed for the 'Namkaran' ceremony or 'Sanskar', the child was bathed and dressed.⁴² The Brahmins-priests and astrologers were then invited.⁴³ A 'Chowk' was then drawn on the floor of the Courtyard- on which, sat the parents, with the child in the mother's lap.⁴⁴

36. Chitravali, p.22, v.53.

37. Ibid; Also, A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p.164.

38. Padmavat, p.52, v.52; ShivRaj Bhushan, p.9, v.13.

39. Geetavali, pp.27-36, v.4-v.6; Also, Ovington, p.197; Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, pp.271-275; Pandey (R.B.), p.142.

40. Manas, p.187, v.196.1; Padmavat, p.52, v.52, And, Geetavali, pp.34-36, v.6.

41. Ibid ; Also, Mrigavati, p.12, v.16; And, Sur Sagar, I, p.290, v.704.

42. Geetavali; pp.34-36, v.6.

43. Ibid; Also, refer 5 above; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.289-290, v.703.

44. Geetavali, p.35, v.6-14.

They worshipped Shiv and Parvati.⁴⁵ Surdas refers to the Practice of application of 'tilak' on the child's fore-head after mixing curd, milk , tumeric and 'Doob'- (a variety of grass considered auspicious):

मूतम सुभा दूब - हरदी - दधि हरभिल सीस बँधाए ।⁴⁶

In the ruling houses and, in the houses of the wealthier persons, professional bards and singers would then assemble and were bestowed with appropriate gifts.⁴⁷ The women-folk sang the 'Mangal-Geet' or Sohilo' to mark the happy occasion.⁴⁸

45. Geetavali, p.34, v.6.4.

46. Sur Sagar, I, p.290, v.705.

47. Ibid; Geetavali, pp.34-36, v.6; And, Mrigavati, p.12, v.16.

48. Geetavali, pp.34-36, v.6.

The Grain-Feeding or Annaprāshan Ceremony :

Generally this ceremony was performed, when the child attained the age of approximately six months :

कान्ह कुँवर की करहु पासनी, कछु दिन घटि छट मास गर ।

नंद महर अह सुनि पुसक्ति जिम , हरि अन्नप्रासन जोग भर ।⁴⁹

The brahmans were called to fix a date, which would be⁵⁰ auspicious for this ceremony. The women-folk assembled and sang the songs for the occasion, that is 'Gari'.⁵¹

They did 'ubtan' before bathing the child, who then wore the 'Jhaguli' (a loose shirt), a cap or 'chautani' on the head and bracelets and anklets :

जमुमति उबटि न्हवाइ कान्ह को, पट - भूषण पहिराइ ।

तन जोगुली, धिर ताल चौतनी , घुरा दुहुँ कर घाइ ।⁵²

49. Sur Sagar, I, pp.290-291, v.706.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid , pp. 291-292, v. 707.

The father then took the child in his lap. Rice-pudding was especially prepared for this celebration and on it was sprinkled a little bit of 'ghee' and 'honey'.⁵³ As soon as the child tasted the pudding or 'kheer' - the ladies started singing.⁵⁴ Then six types of edibles were brought forward and the child tasted a little bit of each of them.⁵⁵ Then a general feast would commence and everybody would have his heart full.⁵⁶

The Birthday Celebrations :

At the completion of a child's one year, the birthday was usually celebrated with eclat, in the case of the boys.⁵⁷ The 'ubtan' was applied, before the children were bathed.⁵⁸ The boy was then dressed in good clothes, worn a cap, as well as, ornaments like necklace, armlets, anklets etc.⁵⁹

53. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 291-292, v. 707.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 293-294, v. 712, v. 713, & v. 714.

58. Ibid, p. 293, v. 712.

59. Sur Sagar, I, p. 293, v. 712; Also, pp. 293-294, v. 713.

The Brahmins were consulted to fix the auspicious time for the celebrations.

मेरे कहें बिपुनि बुलाह , एक सुभ घरी घराह, ⁶⁰

The women -relatives and friends sang 'Mangal Gan' or auspicious songs.⁶¹ A 'chowk' was made of chalk, tumeric, vermilion in the courtyard, on which the child sat and certain religious rites were performed.⁶² In the evening, the usual festivities were held, including songs, dances and feast.⁶³

Tausure or Chura-karm ceremony :

The Brahmins performed the religious rites during the churakarm ceremony, for which they received enough money or 'Dakshina' :

बूड़ाकरन कीन्ह गुरु जाई । बिपुन्ह पुनि दठिना बहु पाई ।। ⁶⁴

60. Sur Sagar, I, p.293, v. 7.12; Also, pp.293-294, v.713; Also, v.714.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. 252 Vaishnavon ki varta, p.365.

64. Manas, p.192. v.202.2.

Though, the chura-karm ceremony, which involved the hair-cutting also known as 'Mundan' was performed, generally, from the age of one to three.⁶⁵ However, Al-beruni and others refer to this ceremony, as performed not earlier than the age of three, leaving one lock on the top of the head.⁶⁶ Sometimes, this ceremony was held at the time of the marriage of some near relatives of the child.⁶⁷

The Karn-Bhed or Ear-Lobe Piercing Ceremony :

It has also been referred to as 'Kanchedan' ceremony in Sur Sagar of Surdas.⁶⁸ It entailed the piercing of the lobe of both the ears and putting on golden ear-rings on them :

कंधन के छेद कर मोंगाइ लिए, कहाँ कहा छेदनि आहुँ की ।⁶⁹

65. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), 166.

66. Sachau, II, p.157; Growse, p.102; Shree Krishna Chaitanya, I, p.304; De laet, p.80; R.B. Pandey, p.162; P. Thomas, p.89; G.P. Mazumdar, pp.335-337.

67. Refer f.n. 65.

68. Sur Sagar, I, p.321, v.798.

69. Sur Sagar, I, p.321, v.798.

This ceremony, that is, the piercing of the ear-lobes was performed by the barber :

रोचत देखि जननि अकुलानी, दियो तुरत नोजा को घुरकी ।⁷⁰

The spot to be pierced was always marked before by the yellow colour or 'Rochan'.⁷¹ The child, generally, wept on account of the pain, due to this piercing.⁷² Thus, to divert his attention and to keep his mouth full-so that, he couldnot weep - jaggery was always given to the child in advance :

कान्ह कुँवर को कनछेदन है, हाथ सोहारी भेली गुर की ।⁷³

Throughout the ceremony, the ladies kept on singing certain songs for the occasion.⁷⁴ And, many gifts were distributed to the barber, servants and, all those present.⁷⁵ According to Al-beruni, the perforation of the ear takes place in the seventh and eighth year.⁷⁶

70. Sur Sagar, I, p.321, v.798.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Sur Sagar, I, pp.321-322, v.799.

75. Ibid.

76. Sachau, II, p.157; Shree Krishna Chaitanya, p.304; Growse, p.102; And, h.B. Pandey, pp.173-174.

The Sacred Thread or 'Upnayan' Ceremony :

The 'Upnayan' ceremony is also referred to as 'Yagyopavit' or simply 'Janew', that is, the sacred thread :

भर कुमार जबहिं सब भ्राता । दीन्ह जनेउ गुरु पितु माता ॥⁷⁷

Emperor Jahangir, while describing the four modes of a Brahman's life, refers to this ceremony.⁷⁸ This ceremony, as well as, the wearing of the sacred thread was considered to be the exclusive privilege of the three higher castes.⁷⁹

The symbol of this ceremony was the 'Janew' or sacred thread, which was a cord of 'Munja' grass⁸⁰ or of cotton⁸¹, usually 2½ yards long. It was made into three strings, which were worn by the boy after reciting certain

77. Manas, p.193, v.203.2; Also, Ramagya Prashu, p.69. Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.305-306, v.3711.

78. Iuzuk (R. & B.) I, p.357; Also, Macauliffe, I, pp.16-18.

79. Macauliffe, I, p.17: "On the janeo ceremony of Guru Nanak, the priest explained: "Before this ceremony and the investiture of the sacred thread, a boy of any of the three higher castes is not recognised as belonging to his proper caste but a Sudra." Also, (S.N. Sen) Travels of thevenot and careri, p.385 & pp.4,15; P. Thomas, p.90; R.B. Pandey, p.49.

80. R.B. Pandey, p.224; Dubouis, I, p.167.

81. Guru Nanak refers to it : Macauliffe, I, p.17; Careri (Sen) p.259; Pyrard, I, pp.372-373; Travels in India in the 17th Century, p.392; And G.F. Mazumdar, p.346.

prayers over it.⁸² The three threads were, in fact, supposed to represent the Trinity, that is, the Hindu Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.⁸³ It was, also supposed to represent the body, speech and mind and a person got control over these when the knots were tied.⁸⁴

The ceremony was the beginning of the boy's life as a student or 'Brahmacharya' life, where the acquisition of knowledge was the chief aim. :

----- । दीन्ह जेउ गुरु पिदु माता ॥
गुरुहँ गए पढ़ेन रघुराई । असप काल बिद्या सब आई ॥⁸⁵

'Gayatri Mantra' was then given to the boy, by speaking it in his ears. Thus, 'Gayatri Mantra' and 'Sandhya vadan' become two important rituals, to be fulfilled lifelong, by the boy, who was initiated by this ceremony.⁸⁶

82. Tuzuk (R. & B.), I, p.357; Ain, III, p.274; Macauliffe, I, p.17; Also, R.E. Pandey, p.224; J.A. Dubois, I, p.167; Della valle, I, pp.88-89; Purchas' India, p.112; Herbert's Travels, p.46.

83. Careri (Sen) p.260; Thomas; p.90; J.A. Dubois, I, p.163; G.P. Mazumdar, pp.346-347.

84. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.196, f.n. 43.

85. Manas. p.193, v.203.2, Sur Sagar, II, pp.305-306, v.3711. Also, A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p. 166; Growse, p.102;

86. Sur Sagar, II, pp.305-306, v.3711 & 3712; Also, Manas, p.193, v. 203.2

This initiation or sacred-thread ceremony was always followed by singing, dancing and elaborate feasts.⁸⁷ The Brahmins were called for the initiation and they were presented with many gifts which included the cows bedecked with ornaments.⁸⁸ And, much money was distributed as 'Neochhawar' :

मातु देवकी परम सुदित हवै , देति निष्ठावरि बारि ।⁸⁹

The age at which, this ceremony took place, was not fixed. It, generally, depended on the growth and capacity of the child to comprehend and grasp things easily.⁹⁰ It was held around the age of eight years.⁹¹ Sometimes, between the age of eight and twelve years.⁹² It was, thus, performed when the child had reached the adolescent age or 'Kumar' age.⁹³

87. Sur Sagar, II, pp. 305-306, v. 3711 & v. 3712.

88. Ibid; Also, Tuzuk (R.&B.), I, p. 357.

89. Sur Sagar, II, pp. 305-306, v. 3711 & v. 3712.

90. A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p. 167.

91. Tuzuk (R.&B.), I, p. 357.

92. Guru Nanak was invested with the sacred thread, at the age of nine years : Macauliffe, p. 16; Careri (Sen), p. 259; Ardhkatha, p. 4, v. 46, 47 & 48.

93. Manas, p. 193, v. 2032; Also, R.B. Pandey, pp. 198-204; P. Thomas, p. 90; G.P. Mazumdar, pp. 345-347.

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Pre - Marriage :

When somebody had a grown-up daughter of marriageable age, he would try to find out a suitable match for his daughter :

बारह बरिस माँह भइ रानी । राखै सुना सँबोग समानी ।⁹⁴

According to the Medieval custom, the preceptor or Purohit⁹⁵ (even Purohitayin)⁹⁶ and the barber were sent, with full authority, to select a boy and settle the match with his parents. When a suitable match, that is, of the same caste and, of equal status was found, the marriage was settled, with a formal agreement :

राजा कहै गरब के हौं रे इन्द्र सिवसौक ।

को सरि मोसों पावे कासों करौं बरोक ।।⁹⁷

94. Padmavat, p.54, v.54; Also, Nainsi's khyat, I, p.228.

95. Nainsi's khyat, I, p.228; 252 Vaishnavon ki varta, p.69; Badauni, II, pp.60-61; Sanyal, Chaitanya, pp.365-366.

96. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.179.

97. Padmavat, p.53, v.53; Also, Nainsi's khyat, I, p.228 And, A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.170.

The 'Varrok' or Tilak Ceremony :

When both parties had agreed to enter into a matrimonial alliance, the betrothal or tilak ceremony was celebrated :

मिला सुबं अंस उजियारा । भा बरोक औ तिलक सँवारा ।⁹⁸

Thus, 'Tilak' was almost like making a formal agreement for a marriage thereafter. Thus, it was also known as 'Var-Rok' or reserving the bridegroom.⁹⁹ The girl's father sent presents and cash to the prospective bride-groom through the preceptor or 'Purohit'.¹⁰⁰

Finally, an auspicious day was fixed for the marriage ceremony, after consulting the astrologers, who tallied the horoscopes of both the prospective bride, as well as, the groom.¹⁰¹

98. Padmavat, p.260, v.274.

99. Ibid; Also, p.53, v.53; And, pp.255-256, v.269.

100. Nainsi's khyat, I, p.228; 252 Vaishnavon ki varta, p.69; And, A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.170;

101. Manas, p.284, v.311.4; Padmavat, p.261, v.275; Mrigavati, pp.119-120, v.148; Storia, III, p.59; Bernier, pp.161-162; Also, 'Observations on the Mussalmans of India, I, pp.352-353; And, J.U.P.H.S., Vol. VII, Part I, January, 1934.

The date for marriage being settled, invitations were issued on palm-leaves dyed with saffron to mark the jubilation and the solemnity of the auspicious occasion.¹⁰² The marriage season among the Hindus, started from the 'Devothhan Ekadashi'.¹⁰³ And, as per the traditions, it could be performed on months other than 'Sawan', 'Bhadon', 'kuar', 'Kartik' and 'poos'.¹⁰⁴

It is really a difficult task to give a comprehensive description of the marriage ceremonies among the Hindus, which differ from caste to caste, from tribe to tribe, and from province to province.¹⁰⁵ But religious and

102. 252 Vaishnavon ki Varta, pp.205-208; Storia, III, p.59
Also, Mrigavati, pp.119-120, v.148.

103. Nainsi's khyat, I, p.228.

104. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.170.

105. T.V. Mahalingam's Social life ; P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.180.

social conservatism being very strong in India, so much so, that, the outlines of Sanskars' as Abul Fazl notes, were observed in much the same manner everywhere as in Vedic times.¹⁰⁶ Of the eight forms of marriages recognized by the Smritis only the Brahmya remained in vogue in Medieval India.¹⁰⁷ The rites in this form of marriage included, the wearing of red bracelets by the brides.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, around the waist of the bridegroom, a piece of cloth was tied, containing minute particles of different things. It was taken off after the marriage on an auspicious day, with due rituals and ceremonies.¹⁰⁹

First of all a 'Mandap' was constructed at the bride's place :

छाए जू फूलनि कुंज मंडप , फूलनि में बेदी रखी ।¹¹⁰

106. Ain, III, pp.338-339.

107. Ain, III, pp.338-339; R.E. Pandey, p.375; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.180.

108. Macauliffe, I, p.145.

109. Growse (Ramayan of Tulsidas), p.175.

110. Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1690; Also, Padmavat, p.261, v.275. Ramayan (Growse), p.158; And, Storia, III, p.62; Manas, p.263, v.286.3.

It was, generally, an arbour- though, decorated with jewels¹¹¹ etc. also, to add to the pomp and glamour of the marriage ceremony. Similarly, a mandap was also constructed at the groom's place :

गुरु - आयसु मंख रच्यो , सब साज सजाई ।
तुलसीदास दसरथ बरात सजि , ॥ ¹¹²

That, the 'Guru' or the priest played an important part in the ritual pertaining to the mandap's construction also, is evident from the above verse.¹¹³

111. Padmavat, p.261, v.275 refers to 'Manik Mando' and 'Sandalwood pillars'; Manas, p.263, v.286.4; Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1690.

112. Geetavali, pp. 163-164, v.103 & p.166, v.105.

113. Ibid.

The festoons of mango-leaves, known as 'Bandanwar' were hung around the pillars of the 'mandap' , as well as, the main door of the house, that is, the entrance :

घर घर बंदन रहे दुआरा । - - - - - ¹¹⁴

The 'mandap' and the whole house was also, similarly, decorated with wedding wreaths of flowers or 'Torans' :

बारन तोरन बंधाई , हरि कीन्ह उछाह । ¹¹⁵

The entrance, as well as, the mandap, was decorated with the vessels of gold or 'Kanak Kalash' ¹¹⁶ which played an important part in the rituals also. ¹¹⁷

114. Padmavat, p.261, v.275; Sur Sagar, I, pp.273-274, v.656; Also , Manas, p.263, v.286.4.

115. Sur Sagar, I, p.632, v.1692; Manas, p.263, v.286.4

116. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 265-267, v.542; p.583, v.1814; Also, Geetavali, p.166, v.105.

117. Geetavali , p.166, v. 105.

The Marriage Procession or Barat :

On the day, fixed by the astrologers, the marriage procession started from the groom's house, amidst the singing of 'Mangal-Geet'¹¹⁸ or auspicious songs by the ladies, playing of various drums¹¹⁹ and musical instruments like 'Shahnai' :

सुर नर नारि सुमंगल गार्ह । सरस राग बाजहिं सहनार्ह ॥¹²⁰

Before they moved, certain Gods¹²¹ and especially, Ganesh was venerated.¹²²

118. Manas, p.271, v.296.1, & V.296.4; p.274, v.300.3; p.275, v.301.3.

119. Manas, p.274, v.300.1 & p.275, v. 302.

120. Manas, p.275, v. 301.3.

121. Manas, p.275, v. 301.

122. Ibid; Also, Geetavali, pp.163-164, v.103.6; It is still considered an auspicious ritual to be performed for the successful accomplishment of a journey, or a new work.

The marriage procession which, thus, started from the house of the bride-groom with much fanfare was known as the 'Barat':

तुलसीदास दसरथ बरात साधि ,¹²³

And, the people who formed this procession or 'barat' were referred to, as the 'Barati' :

आव माँझ भा दूल्हा सोई । और बराति संग सब कोई ।¹²⁴

If coming from some distant place, it would, generally, arrive a day before the actual wedding date; at the brides' Place :

प्रथम बरात लगन लैं आई । ताँलें पुर प्रमोद अधिकाई ।।¹²⁵

The brides party saw to the arrangements of the barat throughout the distance that was travelled, to make the journey convenient and comfortable.¹²⁶

123. Geetavali, pp.163-164, v.103; Also, Manas, p.275, v.301.2; p.277, v.303.2; p.278, v.304.4 & v.305 .4.

124. Padmavat, p.265, v.279; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1690. Manas, p.279, v. 306.1.

125. Manas, p.281, v.308.4.

126. Manas, p.277, v.303.3.

The bridegroom's marriage procession, included a number of horses.¹²⁷ He, himself, generally, came mounted on a beautifully decorated horse :

पैरि तुरग पर रामु बिराये । गति बिलौकि स्नानायकु लाये ॥¹²⁸

Many an elephants¹²⁹, as well as, chariots¹³⁰ and 'kanwars' or 'palquins',¹³¹ also constituted the barat. Thus, the baratis, that is, the friends and relatives of the bridegroom, in their best attire, either followed him on foot or in various transport means, according to their status.¹³²

The Indian marriage processions were always¹³³ headed by a musical party with 'drums and wind instruments :

आह बजावत पैठि बराता । - - - - - 134

127. Manas, pp.271,v.297.1; p.272, v.297.2 & v.297.3, v. 298.1.

128. Manas,p.287,v.315.4; v. 315.5 v.316 & v. 316.1. Della Valle,I, pp.430-431; Mandelslo,p.62; Travels of Thevenot & Careri (sen), p.248. Parishisht Nanddas, p.374,v.37.

129. Manas, p.273, v. 299.1; Also, p.271, v. 297.1.

130. Manas,p.271,v.297.1; p.272,v. 298.2; p.273,v.298.3 & v. 299. p.274, v.300.3 & 300.4. Jayasi refers to the groom in chariot : Padmavat, p.265,v.279;

131. Manas,p.273,v.299.2;p.274,v.299.4;

132. Della Valle',I,pp.430-431;

133. Ibid; Travels of Thevenot & Careri (Sen),p.248; Janki Mangal, p.56, v. 127, Chitravali,p.197.

Many other pastimes were included in the 'barat' , to increase the merriment.¹³⁵ It also included a number of professional bards and singers.¹³⁶

Torches, lamps and candles, usually, preceded a procession at night.¹³⁷ And, as the processions moved on, it was a common practice to let off or fire bombs and fireworks and "Cast squibs and crackers into the air."¹³⁸

134. Padmavat, p.267,v. 282 ; Manas, p.275,v. 301.3 & 302. p.277, v.304; p.284,v.312.2; p.289, v.317.3.

135. Della Valle (1664 Ed.),I,pp.430-431;Also,II (Ed. Edward Grey) p.428; Travels of T & C (Sen), p.248, And,A.P. Mathur (Thesis),p.172.

136. Ibid; Manas, p.273,v.299.3; p.287,v.315.3.

137. Bartolomeo, p.280.

138.Chitravali,p.198; Mandelslo,p.62; Storia,III,pp.150-151; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture , p. 181.

The bride-groom could easily be recognized, amidst the 'barat' by the peculiar head-dress that he wore. It has been referred to as 'Shehra'¹³⁹ and, also, 'Mor' :

मोर मुकुट रधि मोर बनाओ । - - - - - 140

The Hindu bride-grooms also wore yellow clothes on such an important and auspicious ceremony.¹⁴¹ Even, the sacred thread or 'Janew' worn by the groom was of the yellow colour :

पीत जनेउ महाछवि देई । - - - - - 142

139. Sur Sagar, I, p. 632, v. 1692 : लटकत सिर सेहरो मनु, सिद्धि सिखंड झर ।।

140. Sur Sagar, I, pp. 630-631, v. 1690; Also, II, pp. 540-541, v. 4806 : ग्राम तपोगी आपनी, देखि असुर सिर मोर ।
Thus it was symbolic of marriage; Also, Manas, pp. 301-302, v. 326.2 & 326.5; And, Padmavat, p. 262, v. 276.

141. Geetavali, p. 166, v. 105 & pp. 169-170, v. 108; Also, Travels of Thevenot & Careri (Sen), p. 248; Manas, pp. 301-2, v. 326.2 : पीत पुनीत मनोहर घोती । - - - - -

142. Manas, p. 302, v. 326.3.

After having welcomed them heartily, they were then taken to their lodging or the 'Janwasa', after performing certain formal rituals :

करि पूजा मान्यता बढाई । जनवासे कहूँ चले लवाई ॥ ¹⁴³

The 'Janwasa' was fully-furnished, as well as, well-decorated and elaborately managed :

अति सुंदर दीन्हेउ जनवासा । जहाँ सब कहूँ सब भाँति सुपासा ॥ ¹⁴⁴

On the auspicious day of the marriage,¹⁴⁵ which had been fixed in advance, the brides party went to the 'Janwasa' to invite them formally for the marriage.¹⁴⁶ They were ¹⁴⁷ accompanied by a musical band, 'Mangal-Kalash' and Brahmans. The time for the reception of the 'barat' at the brides' place was generally, dusk (evening) or 'Godhooli Bela' :

ऐनुघूरि बेला बिमल सकल सुमंगल मूल । ¹⁴⁸

143. Manas, p.278,v.305.2; Also, Padmavat,p.264, v. 278, And, Manas, p.98,v.95.

144. Manas, p. 278, v. 305.3 & 305.4; p. 279, v. 306 & v. 306.1

145. Manas,p.283,v.311.3; Also, Sur Sagar,II,p.575,v.4931.

146. Manas, p.284, v. 312.1.

147. Manas, p. 284,v.312.1 & 312.2.

148. Manas,p.284,v.312.

As soon as the news of the approach of the marriage party was received, decorated conveyances were, at once, brought forward. The whole party went ahead to receive the coming bridegroom's procession or 'barat' :

आवत जानि बरात बर सुनि गहगाहे निसान ।

साजि गज रथ पदधर सुरग लेन बसे अगवान ॥¹⁴⁹

for welcoming or 'Agwani' the guests, the bride's people sent all sorts of gifts and presents :

फल अनेक बर बस्तु सुहाई । हरजि भेंट हित भूष पठाई ॥

भूषन बसन महामनि नाना । छग मृग हम गम बहुबिधि जाना ॥¹⁵⁰

These gifts and presents were, then, gracefully accepted by the groom's father,¹⁵¹ who, in turn gave the servants and carriers of these articles, handsome rewards or 'Baksheesh'.¹⁵²

149. Manas, p. 277, v. 304; p. 278, v. 304.4 & v. 305;

150. Manas, p. 277, v. 304.2 ; p. 278, v. 304.3.

151. Ibid, p. 278, v. 305.1 & 305.2.

152. Ibid, p. 278, v. 305.2.

The Reception of Barat at the Bride's Place :

As the marriage procession neared the bride's house, the band at their house also rented the air with musical notes, played by the band party.¹⁵³ The married women or 'Suhagins' alongwith the bride's mother would then collect the sacred things needed for 'Parchhan' of the groom:

रानी सुआसिनि बोलि परिछनि हेतु मंगल साजही ।।¹⁵⁴

Thus 'Arti' and 'Parchhan' of the bride-groom were done by the brides' mother, as soon as, the barat reached their doorsteps and the groom alighted from his conveyance.¹⁵⁵ These rituals were accomplished, amidst the singing of 'Mangal-Geet' and 'Gari',¹⁵⁶ by the ladies present.¹⁵⁷

153. Manas, p.286,v.316.5; p.289,v.317.3 & v. 317.5; Also, p.290, v. 318.2; Also, Kaharanama, p.96.

154. Manas, p.286,v.316.5 & v. 317; p.289,v.317.5; Also, p.290, v. 318.1; Also, Kaharnama, pp.96-97.

155. Ibid; Also, Geetavali, p. 165,v.104.

156. Sur Sagar, I,pp.630-631,v.1690;Manas, p.289,v.317.3 & 317.5; & p.290, v.318.2; And, Kaharanama,p.97.

157. Sur Sagar,I,pp.630-631,v.1690.

The bridegroom was then asked to proceed towards the 'Mandap', amidst the playing of bands, singing by ladies and chanting of Vedic hymns by the Brahmins.¹⁵⁸ He was then given the 'Ardhya' and seated in the mandap :

एहि बिधि रासु मंखहिं आर । अरघु देइ आसन बैतार ॥¹⁵⁹

Mats were also spread on the ground, so that the groom's feet may fall on these beautiful foot-mats and not on the ground :

- - - - - । पट पांवडे परहिं बिधि नाना ।¹⁶⁰

After having seated the bridegroom in the 'Mandap' the ladies once more did his 'Arti' & distributed clothes, cash etc. as 'Neochhawar' :

बैठारि आसन आरती करि निरखि बर सुसु पावही ।

मनि बसन भूषन भूरि वारहिं नारि मंगल गवही ॥¹⁶¹

158. Manas, p.290, v.318.2; Also, Kaharanama, p.97.

159. Manas, p.290, v.318.4; Also, v.318.2; Also, Padmavat, p.297, v.282. And, Kaharnama, p.97.

160. Manas, p.290, v. 318.2.

161. Manas, p.290, v. 318.5; Also, kaharanama, 97.

As per tradition, this Neochhawar was received by certain professional classes.¹⁶²

While, the bride-groom was being seated in the 'Mandap', the two father's met and performed certain vedic and other contemporary rites of the occasion :

मिले जनहु दसरहु अति प्रीती । करि वैदिक लोकिक सब रीती ॥¹⁶³

The bridegroom's father was also given 'Ardhya' or 'Aragh' - made to proceed over the foot-mats or 'Panwade' towards the mandap.¹⁶⁴ He was then given an 'Asan' to sit¹⁶⁵ along- with the other 'baratis'.¹⁶⁶

The 'Purohits' or priests of both the sides then concurred and, decided that the auspicious moment has arrived¹⁶⁷ and the bride should now be brought to the 'mandap' too.¹⁶⁸ The aged ladies and the wives of Brahmins

162. Manas, p. 290, v. 319 ; नाउ बारी माट नट राम निहावरि पाइ।

These classes, as a matter of fact, ~~claim the money of fact,~~ claim the money of Neochhawar even today, in traditional Vedic marriages.

163. Manas, p.291, v. 319.1; v. 319.2.

164. Manas, p.291, v. 319.4.

165. Manas, p.291, v.319.5; p.292, v.320 & 320.2.

166. Manas, p.292, v.320.2.

167. Manas, p.293, v. 321.1.

168. Ibid; Also, v. 321.2; Also, Padmavat, p.272, v.285.

were then consulted, and they, performed the necessary rites and sang 'Mangal-Geet'.

बिग्र बधू कुलवृद्ध बोलाई । करि कुल रीति सुमंगल गाई ॥ ¹⁶⁹

A number of friends, relatives and other ladies would then accompany the bride to the 'mandap',¹⁷⁰ singing beautiful auspicious songs of the occasion.¹⁷¹ She would then enter the 'mandap' amidst these songs and the chanting of hymns by the priests.¹⁷² She was first made to perform certain rites and worship certain Gods.¹⁷³ After having performed these ceremonial rites of the occasion, she was also given a seat :

एहि भौति देव पुत्राइ सीतहि सुभग सिंघासनु दियो ॥ ¹⁷⁴

At the appropriate time, the bride's mother was also asked to come to the 'mandap', so that the actual marriage ceremony could begin.¹⁷⁵ She then sat on the left side of her husband or the bride's father.¹⁷⁶

169. Manas, p. 243, v. 321.2.

170. Manas, p. 293, v. 321.4; Also, p.294,v. 322.

171. Manas, p.293, v. 321.5.

172. Manas, p. 294, v. 322.4.

173. Manas, pp.294,295,v.322.4.1; & v. 322.4.2.

174. Manas, p. 295, v. 322.4.2.

175. Manas, p. 295, v. 323.2.

176. Ibid.

Washing of the Groom's feet or 'Panva Pakharna' :

The marriage ceremony in the mandap began with the performing of the Vedic rite, when the bride's parents washed the groom's feet.¹⁷⁷ First of all, the vessel or the 'golden kalash' containing sacred water and covered with jewel-be-decked large plates or 'Parat' were put before the groom.¹⁷⁸ Amidst the chanting of Vedic hymns,¹⁷⁹ the feet-washing ritual was accomplished :

वरु बिलोकि दपति अमुरागे । पाय पुनीत पसारन लागे ॥¹⁸⁰

177. Manas, p. 293, v. 323.4.

178. Manas, p.293,v.323.3; Also, Padmavet,p.272, v. 285.

179. Manas, p. 296, v. 323.4;

180. Manas, p.296, v. 323.4.1. & v. 323.4.2.

The 'Panigrahan' and 'KanyaDan' :

After the ceremony of 'Panva: Pakharan', the priests of both sides, took the palms of both the bride and the groom and joined them and started describing the geneology or 'Sakhochar' of their respective sides :

बर कुँवरि करतल जोरि साखोघारु दोउ कुलगुर करें ।¹⁸¹

And, thus, 'Panigrahan' was accomplished.¹⁸² The bride's father, alongwith her mother, performed certain rites and, then did the kanyadan, according to the Vedic rites :

करि लोक वेद विधानु कन्यादानु नृपभूषन कियो ।¹⁸³

181. Manas, pp.296-297, v.323.4.3; Also, Geetavali, p.166, v.105 And, Padmavati, p.273, v. 286.

182. Manas, pp.296-297, v. 323.4.3; Also Sur Sagar I, pp.630-631, v. 1690 & Sur Sagar, II, pp.543-544, v.4810.

183. Ibid.

'Havan' and 'Bhanwari' :

An altar, well- decorated was in the centre of the grand mandap. The sacred fire was lighted in the altar.¹⁸⁴ The preceptors or priests then performed the¹⁸⁵ 'Hom' and various other rites.¹⁸⁶

According to the Vedic-rites, it was after the 'Hom' or Havan' that the sacred knot was tied,¹⁸⁷ binding the new couple for mortal eternity. This knot symbolised the fusion of two different individuals or entities into a (henceforward) inseperable oneness.¹⁸⁸

The 'Bhanwari' proceeded the 'Hom' and the tying of the knot :

करि होम विधिवत गण्ठि जोरी होन लागी भावैरी ।।¹⁸⁹

184. Ram Chandrika, p.91,v.7; Also, Chitravali,p.201.

185. Manas,p.297, v. 323.4.4.

186. Ibid

187. Ibid; Also Padmavat,pp.266-267,v.281 & p.272,v.285; p. 273, v. 286; Chitravali; pp.154 & 201; Sur Sagar, I, pp.631-632 ,v.1691 has 'Ganthi; And , Geetavali, p.166,v.105. ' --गण्ठि झूरी पीत पिछोरी ; Mrigavati,

p.97; And, Kabir Granthavali, p.289, v. 24.

188. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p. 178.

189. Manas, p.297, v. 323.4.4.; Also, v. 324.1;And, p.298, v. 324.4. Kabir Granthavali; p.280, v. 24; Also, Padmavat, p.273,v.286; Chitravali, p.154; Ram Chandrika, p.91, v.9; Kavitt-Hatnakar,p.19,v.59; And, Sur Sagar, I,pp.630-631,v.1690; And;Also, Mrigavati,p.121,v.150 And, Kaharanama; p.97.

In the 'Bhanwari', the couple went round the altar seven times. This was known as the 'Saptpadi Bhanwari'.¹⁹⁰ This was accomplished amidst, the chanting of Vedic hymns, singing of auspicious songs by the ladies, playing of the band and drums and showering of the flowers:

जय धुनि बंदी वेद धुनि मंगल गान निसान ।
सुनि हरषीं मरषीं बिबुध सुदर सुधन सुजन ॥¹⁹¹

Alongwith the 'Bhanwari', other rites were also followed and performed by the new couple :

प्रसुदित सुनिन्ह भाँवरी फेरीं । नेगसहित सब रीति निबेरीं ॥¹⁹²

Last, but not the least, important rite to be performed was the application of vermilion by the groom at the brides' parting of the hair :

राम सीम सिर सेंदूर देही । - - - - -¹⁹³

190. Manas, p.297, v.323.4.4; Chitravali, p.154; Kavitt-Hatnakar, p.19, v.59; And, Sur Sagar, I, pp.629-630, v.1689 pp.630-631, v.1691; Geetavali, p.166, v.105; And, A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p.178. And, Also, Padmavat, p.273, v.286;

"फिरहिं दुवो सात फेर को टेके ।"

191. Manas, p.297, v.324 & v. 324; v. 324.2; Padmavat, p.273, v.286; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1691.

192. Manas, p.298, v.324.4; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v. 1691, And, Kabir Granthavali, p.280, v.24.

193. Ibid & Manas, p.298, v.324.5; Also, A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p.178; Growse's Ramayan (Eng.), pp.156-158; Also, Sur Sagar, II, pp.1665, 1671 & 1678.

The newly married couple now sat on one seat, That is, adjacent to each other.¹⁹⁴ And the priests or preceptors advised them about the duties and mutual obligations towards each other.¹⁹⁵ The set formulae, were, in fact, in the shape of questions,¹⁹⁶ to which both the bride, as well as, bride-groom replied in positive in their respective terms.

Post - Nuptials Ceremony :

After the nuptials being over, the groom's father, alongwith the other 'baratis' left for their lodging place or 'Janwasa',¹⁹⁷ amidst the beating of drums, and chanting of Vedic hymns.¹⁹⁸ At the signal from the preceptor, the bride and the bridegroom were led for

194. Manas, p. 298, v. 324.5.1.

195. Ibid.

196. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p. 179.

197. Manas, p.301, v. 325.4.4;

198. Ibid.

the 'Kohbar' ceremony by the ladies singing Mangal songs :

दूतह दूतहिनिन्ह सहित सुंदरि बली कोहबर ब्याह के ।¹⁹⁹

The ceremonial rites of the 'Kul Devta' or the family deity were performed, amidst the singing of Mangal songs by the 'Suhagin' or the married ladies :

कोहबरहिं आने कुँरि कुँरि सुआसिनिन्ह सुख पाइ के ।

अति प्रीति लौकिक रीति लागीं करन मंगल गाइ के ॥²⁰⁰

After much merriment in the 'Kohbar' room,²⁰¹ the bride & the groom were led by their friends to the 'Janwasa' :

बर कुँरि सुंदर सकल सखीं लवाइ जनवासेहि बली ॥²⁰²

199. Manas, p.301, v.325.4.4;

200. Manas, p.302, v.326.5.3.

201. Manas, p.302, v. 326.5.2 & p.303, v.326.5.3.

202. Manas, p.303, v.326.5.3. & v. 327.

The groom alongwith his bride would then meet his father.²⁰³

The 'baratis' were then called for the night feast, as soon as the meals were ready and elaborate arrangements made for the same.²⁰⁴ The bride's father washed the feet of the groom's father and seated him.²⁰⁵ And, then washed the groom's feet and seated him :

बहुरि राम पद पंकज धोए । - - - - - ²⁰⁶

Finally, the feet of all the guests were washed by the friends and relatives of the bride's party²⁰⁷ and, they were given seats according to their respective status :

- - - - - । जपाजोगु पीढ़ह बेठाये ॥²⁰⁸

203. Manas, p.303, v. 327.

204. Manas, p.303,v.327.1.

205. Manas,p.304, v. 327.2.

206. Manas, p. 304, v. 327.3.

207. Manas, p. 304, v. 327.2.

208. Manas,p.305,v.328.3;Also, Mrigavat i,pp.119-120,v.148:

The dishes prepared were of six different tastes or 'Shat-Ras' :

छरस रुधिर बिजन बहु जाती । एक एक रस अगनित भाति ॥²⁰⁹

While the groom's party enjoyed the feast, with different and delicious dishes, the women sang songs of the occasion, which were known as 'Gari' and enjoyed by all :

जैवैत देहि मधुर धुनि गारी । ते ते नाम पुष्कल अरु नारी ॥²¹⁰

After the feast, when the guests had washed their hands and rinsed their mouths clean,²¹¹ they were served betel and certain religious rites were performed by the bride's father, showing his respect to the groom's father :

देह पान पूजे जनक दसरधु सहित समाज ॥²¹²

209. Manas, p.305, v. 328.3; Also, Mrigavati, pp.119-120, v.148 :
"षट्तरस पाँच अंजित आहारा ।"

210. Manas, p.305, v.328.3; Also, v.328-4; And, Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1690.
These 'Garis' are still sung in the marriages in North India during the feasts, in the marriages conforming to the Vedic rituals.

211. Manas, p.305, v. 328.4; Also, Mrigavati, p.120, v.149.

212. Manas, p.305, v.329; Mrigavati, p.120, v.149 refers to tooth-picks being served, along with betels : "जैह धूनि के सरिका लिए । हाथ पछारि पान धुनि दिए ।"

After a few days stay, the barat, would make preparations to return home .²¹³ It would cast a gloom over the bride's house :

सत्यं गवन्तु सुनि सब बिलखाने । मनहु सौं सरसिज सकुषाने ॥²¹⁴

The mother's were really very sad at the departure of their daughters and wept bitterly. But, in between, they also taught them the duties that they should not forget to perform, that is, the 'Nari Dharm' ²¹⁵

The groom was sent by his elder from the 'Janwasa' to bring his wife and perform the last ceremony of 'Vida' :

घले जनक मंदिर हुदित बिदा करावन हेतु ॥²¹⁶

The groom performed 'ubtan' and then took his bath and then was served a delicious and elaborate meal :

भाइन्ह सहित उबटि अन्हवाए । छरस असन अति हेतु वेवाएँ ॥²¹⁷

213; Manas, p.307, v.331.3 & 331.4.

214. Manas, p.307, v. 332.1; Also, p.308, v.333.1 & 333.2;

215. Manas, p.308, v.333.2; p. 309, v. 333.3 & v. 333.4.

216. Manas, p. 309, v. 334.

217. Manas, p. 310, v. 335.2.

Their Arti was performed and things were distributed,
as their 'Neochhawar'.²¹⁸

The final parting between the bride and her
parents, relatives and friends was really heart-rending.²¹⁹

On the other hand, the 'baratis' were happy
and their bands started playing, as they completed prepara-
tions for their journey back home :

समय बिलोकि बाजने बाजे । रथ गज बाजि बरातिन्ह साथे ॥²²⁰

At an auspicious moment,²²¹ the marriage party
started homewards, after venerating the God Ganesh once more:
सुमिरि गजाननु कीन्ह पयाना । मंगल मूल सगुन भर नाना ॥²²²

218. Manas, p. 310, v. 335.

219. Manas, pp. 311 - 312 verses, 336.3-338.2; Padmavat,
p.382, v.378,p.383,v.379; And, p.390, v. 384; Mrigavati,
p.305, v. 353; And, Kaharanama, pp.91 and 92.

220. Manas, p.313, v. 338.3; Also, kaharnama , pp.91 & 92.

221. Manas,p.313,v.338.3.

222. Ibid,v.338.4 & v. 339.

As usual, the journey was long, so lots of provisions for the party and fodder for the animal was made, to be consumed during the return journey.²²³ The bride's father and relatives accompanied the party upto a certain distance:

हुनि कह भ्रूति बधन सुहाए । फिरि महीस दूरि बड़ि आए ॥²²⁴

Then, with final farewells with the groom's father²²⁵ and after giving blessings to the groom,²²⁶ the bride's father finally returned, along with other relatives and friends. And, the 'Barat' returned homewards, with due halts.²²⁷

When the bride was very small, this ceremony of 'vidai' was postponed for a few years. This when, finally, held was known as 'Gauna':

हाइ बियाह हुनि होइहि गवना । - - - - - 228

223. *Manas*, p.308, v. 332.2. & v.332.3.

224. Ibid, p.313, v. 339.3; Also, v. 339.1; And, *Padmavat*, p.391, v.385.

225. Ibid; Also, v.339.4; p.314, v.340; v. 340.1.

226. Ibid; p.315, verses, 341.4, 342 & 342.1.

227. Ibid, p.316, v.343.

228. *Padmavat*, pp.266-267, v.261; *Sujan Rashkhan*, p.26, v.51; And, 'Gabd', *Kabir-Santbani Sangrah*, p.9, v.13.

The bride was fully decorated and adorned with ornaments, perfumes etc. as a newly married bride.²²⁹ And, once more many things and cash were given as 'Dahej' to the groom's party :

औ सँग दला गवन जेत साजा । - - - - - 230

The 'Dahej' or Gifts and Presents :

According to the Vedic rites and customs, as mentioned by Tulsidas,²³¹ the 'Dahej' was presented in the 'mandap' itself, after the final rite of the marriage ceremony, that is putting the vermilion in the hair-parting of the bride by the groom,²³² was over :

जसि रघुबीर ब्याह बिधि बरनी । सकल हँवर ब्याहे तेहि करनी ॥

कहि न जाइ कछु दाहज भूरी । रहा कनक मनि मँखु पुरी ॥²³³

229. Padmavat, p.569, v. 615; Also, l above.

230. Padmavat, p.391, v.385 & p.392, v. 386.

231. Manas, p.295, v. 323.

232. Manas, p.298, v.324.4; Mrigavati, p.121, v.150; And, Padmavat, p.273, v.286.

233. Manas, p.299, v. 325.1; Sur Sagar, II, pp.542-543, v.4808; & pp. 543-544, v.4810; Also, Padmavat, p.273, v.286; & pp.274-275, v.287; Also, p.391, v.385; And, Mrigavati, p.121, v.150; Janki Mangal, p.50, v.77. And, Also, Ram Chandrika, p.91, v. 9.

Thus, it inevitably included gold, gems, precious stones and jewels is evident from the afore-mentioned verse.²³⁴ Many rugs, clothes, expensive silken clothes were also given.²³⁵ It also included elephants, horses, chariots and cows bedecked with many ornaments.²³⁶ Many a slaves - both male and female were also sent as part of the 'Dahej' to the groom's house :

गज रथ तुरग दास अरु दासी । - - - - - ²³⁷

The horses, chariots, bedecked with ornaments were again given at the time of the 'barat's' departure for home :

तुरग लाइ रथ सहस्र पक्षीसा । सकस सँघारे नल अरु सीसा ॥ ²³⁸
Elephants, cows and buffaloes were also included in the 'Dahej'.²³⁹ Carts full of gold, clothes and jewels were then sent along with the marriage procession.²⁴⁰

234. Manas, p.299, v.325.1; Sur Sagar, II, pp.542-543, v.4808: & pp.543-544, v.4810; Also, Padmavat, p.273, v.286; & pp.274-275, v.287; Also, p.391, v.385; And, Mrigavati, p.121, v.150; Janki Mangal, p.60, v.77. Also, Ram Chandrika, 91, v.9.

235. Manas, p.299, v. 325.2; Refer 3 above.

236. Manas, p.299, v. 325.2; Also, Padmavat, p.391, v.385. Janki Mangal, p.60, v.77; And, Ram Chandrika, p.91, v.9.

237. Ibid;

238. Manas, p.308, v.332.3; And, Padmavat, p.391, v.385.

239. Ibid, v. 332.4

240. Ibid; And, Padmavat, p.391, v.385.

Simplified Nuptials :

Sometimes the marriage was celebrated in a simpler way,²⁴¹ by deleting a number of customs and rituals. And, in this form of simple marriage, 'Jaimal' gained prevalence and popularity :

स्वमिनि कर जेमारा गही । आनि कुंवर सिर उपर दिही ।²⁴²

And, we have reference of the groom also garlanding the bride in turn :

चाँद के हाथ दीन्ह जेमाला । चाँद आनि सूरें गियें घाला ।²⁴³
सूरख लीन्ह चाँद पहिराई । हार नखत तरइन्ह सिउँ पाई ।

In such a simplified form of marriage, the basic rituals like tying of the knot,²⁴⁴ taking the seven rounds of the sacred fire in the altar, the clasping of the palms of the bride and the groom²⁴⁵ and, then the 'Neochhawar'.
Dahej was also given.²⁴⁷

241. P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.182.

242. Mrigavati, p.120, v.149; Also, Manas, p.228, v.244.2 : Tulsidas, refers to it as 'Urmala'; Sur Sagar, I, p.632, v.1692; And, Padmavat, p.273, v. 286.

243. Padmavat, p.273, v.286.

244. Padmavat, p.272, v.285; & p.273, v.286; Mrigavati, p.121, v.150.

245. Padmavat, p.273, v.286; Mrigavati, p.121, v.150.

246. Padmavat, p.273, v.286.

247. Ibid; Also, Mrigavati, p.121, v.150; And, Sur Sagar, II, pp.542-543, v.4808; pp.546-547, v.4816.

The 'Swayamvar' :

In the higher -caste families, we also get a reference of marriages according to the girl's desire since, the choice was left to her or, also, decided on the fulfilment of certain conditions, it was referred to as 'Swayamvar'.

कन्या भूय विदेह की स्वकी अधिकारि ,
तासु स्वयंवर सुनि सब आई 248

And, it was customary in such forms of marriages that the choic was expressed by the girl by garlanding the man of her choice. This was known as 'Jaimal' :

गावहिं छवि अवलोकि सहेली । सिधैं जयमाल राम उर मेली ।।²⁴⁹

It is also evident that this rite was performed amidst the singing of auspicious songs by the ladies present,²⁵⁰ playing of musical bands²⁵¹ and chanting of Vedic hymns by the priests.²⁵²

248. Geetawali, pp.163-164, v.103; Sur Sagar, II, pp.550-551, v.4727. Also, Manas, p.224, v.239.1:

"सीय स्वयंवर देखि आई ।"

249. Manas, p.245, v.263.4 & also, v.263.3 & v. 264.

250. Ibid ; Also, p.244, v.262.1, Also, Geetawali, p.162, v.102.

251. Ibid; v. 264.1; Also, p.244, v. 262.1.

252. Ibid; v. 264.2.

Further, the bards would sing praises for the new groom and his ancestors, that is, geneology :

- - - - - । बंदी बिरिदावति उच्चरही । ²⁵³

Then the men, as well as, the women performed the 'Arti' and did 'Neochhawar' :

करहिं आरती पुर नर नारी । देहिं निछावरि बित्त बिसारी ।। ²⁵⁴

It was then expected of the new bride to pay regards to her choice as husband, by touching his feet.²⁵⁵

Similarly, we also get the reference of forcible elopement for the purposes of marriage. This form of marriage was referred to as, 'Haran'.²⁵⁶

253. Manas, p.245, v. 264.2.

254. Manas, p.245,v.264.3; Also, Geetavali, pp.162,v.102.

255. Manas,p.246,v.264.4

256. Sur Sagar, II, pp.540-541, v.4806; Also, Manas, where Ravan forcibly takes away Sita for marriage-though, she refused; p.823,v.47.4; pp.722-723, verses, 8.2;8.3,8.4, 8.5 & 9.

'The Return of the 'Barat' And Its Reception at Home :

As the 'barat' neared the groom's home on its return journey, once more, did the drums, bands, conch shells and 'shahnai' started playing creating an atmosphere of music and celebrations :

हने निसान परब बर बाजे । मेरि संछ धुनि हम गन्न गाजे ॥
झॉल्लि बिल डिट्टिमी सुहाई । सरस राग बाजहिं सस्नाई ॥²⁵⁷

The bridegroom's house was now decorated and dressed-up for the occasion.²⁵⁸ Perfumes were sprayed²⁵⁹ 'chowks' were made of chalk etc.²⁶⁰; festoons and buntings curved gracefully from one post to the other;²⁶¹ Beautiful trees were planted to add to the glamour of the place,²⁶² and the sacred 'kalash' of gold were, also, tastefully decorated.²⁶³

257. Manas, p.316,v.343.1.

258. Ibid, v.343.2.

259. Ibid, v.343.3.

260. Ibid.

261. Ibid.

262. Ibid; p.317,v. 343.4.

263. Ibid, v. 344.

And, as the party neared the house, the married women would gather the sacred things required for the Arti and sang the auspicious songs :

ब्रूय ब्रूय मिलि बलीं सुआसिनि । - - - - - ॥
सकल सुमंगल सजें आरती । गावहिं जनु बहु बेध भारती ॥²⁶⁴

Lord Shiv and Lord Ganesh of the Hindu pantheon were worshipped and Brahmans were given many presents and alms.²⁶⁵ The mothers would then prepare things for the ritual, known as 'Parchhan'. This was performed with a platter or 'Thal' with a lighted lamp on it. This 'Thal' contained turmeric ('harad'), a special variety of grass (or 'Doob'), curd ('Dahi'), new leaves ('pallav') and flower ('Phool'), betel-leaves ('Pan') betel-nuts ('Poogphal'), rice ('akshat'), sprouts ('ankur'), yellow colour ('Lochan' or 'Kochan'), parched rice (Laja or Lawa) and 'tulsi-leaves'.²⁶⁶

They, then performed the 'Arti' and sang the auspicious songs.²⁶⁷ And, with the 'Thal' with the sacred-articles in it, they performed the ritual of 'Parchhan' also :

कनक धार भरि मंगलन्हि कमल करन्हि लिएं मात ।
बलीं सुदिस परिछनि करन पुस्तक पल्लवित गात ॥²⁶⁸

264. Manas, p.317, v.344.3.

265. Manas, p.318, v. 345.

266. Manas, p.318, verses , 345.2, 345.3, 345.4.

267. Manas, p.318, v. 345.4.

268. Manas, p.318, v.346.

Much rejoicing was done with the ladies singing and dancing in the joy of celebrations.²⁶⁹ The voices of the ladies' songs, and vedic hymns, as well as, of the bards singing praises would intermingle all-around.²⁷⁰ And, the bands would start playing.²⁷¹ And, everyone performed the ritual of 'Neochhawar' of the newly married couple.²⁷² The ladies performed 'Arti' of the groom and peeped inside the palquin, after raising its curtain, to have a look at the newly married bride :

सिबिका सुभा ओहार उधारी । देखि दुसहिनिन्ह होहि सुखारी ॥ ²⁷³

And, then the groom's mother did the 'Parchhan' of the newly married couple, as soon as they put their steps on the door-steps.²⁷⁴ They did 'Arti' & 'Neochhawar' of the couple.²⁷⁵

The 'baratis' were also given a number of gifts and presents and then, they went to their respective houses.²⁷⁶ The alms- beggars and the band-players were also given

269. Manas, p.319, v. 347.

270. Manas, p.319, v. 347.1.

271. Manas, p.319, v. 347.2.

272. Manas, p.320, v. 347.3.

273. Manas, p.320, v.347.4.

274. Ibid, v. 348; Also, p.321, v. 349;

275. Ibid, v. 348.1; Also, p.321, v.349.2 & v. 349.3.

276. Ibid, p. 322, v. 350.2 & v. 350.3.

lots of money.²⁷⁷ The married ladies and other relatives were then given 'Pahirawan'²⁷⁸ (that is, clothes etc.) And, 'Neg' was given to the women-folk of the various professional classes.²⁷⁹

The whole night would then be spent by the ladies in feasts, festivities and celebrations of joy, that is , 'Ratjaga'.²⁸⁰ This was also an important custom of the medieval times.

The next day or after a few days, on an auspicious date and time, the bracelets were put off, from the hands of the bride and the bride-groom . This was the final ritual and on its completion, the marriage ceremony reached its logical end :

सुदिन सोधि कल कंकन छोरे । मंगल मोद बिनोद न धोरे ॥²⁸¹

277. Manas, p. 322, v. 350.4.

278. Manas, p. 324, v. 352.3

279. Ibid.

280. Manas, p. 325, v. 354; v. 354.1; And, p.327,v.357.1.

281, Manas, p.329, v. 359.1.

Dhareja

It will not be out of place to mention, a special and simple marriage ceremony, performed among the members of the low castes. After the death of the wife, the bereaved person, could take a woman as his wife, after a short ceremony, chiefly, consisting of a feast to the caste-members and friends.²⁸² This ceremony has been referred to as 'Dhareja'.²⁸³

Other Rites & Customs :

During the performance of the various socio-religious rites of the marriage ceremony, we find that 'chowk' was always made and the various ceremonies held over them :

गलीं सकल अरागजों सिंघाई । जहें तहें चौकें धारु पुराई ॥²⁸⁴

282. A.P. Mathur (Thesis) , p. 187.

283. '252 Vaishvanon ki varta', p. 25.

284. Manas, p.316, v. 343.3; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.630-631, v.1690; And, II, p.71, v. 2724.

Similarly the importance of kush during the fulfilment of religious rites cannot be minimised. During the 'Kanya Dan' rite, 'kush' was kept in the hand of the bride's father :

अहि गिरिस कुस कन्या पानी | भवति समरपी जनि भवति || 285

During various ceremonies right from the ceremony of engagement to the celebrations of Child-birth, we find a custom of 'God-Bharai' being performed.²⁸⁶

We come across another custom of 'Haldi', in which the turmeric paste was applied on the whole body and especially on the forehead.²⁸⁷ Similarly, 'mahawar' or the red colour was applied on the feet of both the bride, as well as, the bride - groom :

जाक जुत पद फमल सुगन्ध | मुनि मन मधुप रत्न जिन् दास || 288

285. Manas, p.104, v.100.1.

286. Sur Sagar, I, p. 507, v.1322;

तिल, चोंवरी, बतसि, मेक, नैयौ कुंवरी को गोप ।

287. Kabir Granthavali, p.280, v.24; Also, Kaharanama, p.88.

288. Manas, p. 301, v.326.1.

The auspicious songs were sung by the ladies on almost all important occasions, as a mark of celebration and gaiety, right from the child's birth to its marriage.²⁸⁹ And, so was the ritual of 'Arti' performed as a part of religious functions, as well as, social customs.²⁹⁰

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289. Sur Sagar, I, p.262, v. 632; p.268, v. 645; pp.293-294, v.713 & v. 714; p.476, v.1225; pp.630-631, v.1690; Also, II, p.71, v.2724 & p. 86, v.2790. And, pp. 163-164, v.4808; Kabir Granthavali, pp.140-141, v.1.2; p.280, v.24 & p.382, v.7. Kaharanama, pp.96-97; Manas, p.96, v.93.3 & p.289, v.317.3 Geetavali, pp.155-156, v. 96; pp.163-164, v.103; And, Padmavat, p.263, v.277.
290. Sur Sagar, I, pp.267-268, v.644 & pp.274-275, v.658; p.593, v.1586. Manas, p.98, v.95.2; p.288, v.316.5 & 317; p.318, v.345.1 & p. 320, v.348. Geetavali, p.173, v.110.

The Funeral ceremonies :

The funeral ceremony or the 'Antyesti',²⁹¹ is of great importance among the Hindus, to whom the value of the next world is higher or greater than that of the present one.²⁹² After death a person, -- was, generally, cremated.²⁹³ Cremation as per the Vedic religion, was 'regarded as offering into the sacred fire, conducting the corpse to heaven as a sacrificial gift.'²⁹⁴ It became the most recognized mode of the disposal of the corpse during the Mughal period, as it prevented the "Corpse being devoured by worms and putrefaction."²⁹⁵

291. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v. 494;

292. R.B. Pandey, p.407; Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, IV, pp. 476-478; Sinclair Stevenson, p.136.

293. Dadu Dayal ki Bani, p.185, v. 63; Also. verses 64 & 65; Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494.

294. R.B. Pandey, p.443; P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p.212, f.n. 256.

295. Terry, Early Travels, p.323; Ovington, p.342; Also, Herbert's Travels, p.46; And, Ain, III (J & S) p.355.

Burial was another method of the disposal of the dead body.²⁹⁶ In special circumstances, if wood and water were not available - Hindu law- givers allowed the corpse to be buried, or thrown into the water.²⁹⁷ This inhumation or burial- proper- preferably, water - burial, was, however, resorted to , in the case of small children and ascetics, who did not need purification.²⁹⁸

If, due to some reason, the dead body could not be disposed off immediately, it was preserved in oil and kept in a coffin or box-so that the decomposition might not set in :

तेल नावें भरि नृप तनु राखा । - - - - - 299

296. Dadu Dayal ki Bani, p.185, verses 63-65; Ain, (J & S) III, p.355.

297. Travels of Thevenot & Careri, p.34;

298. Ain (J. & S.) III, p.355; Storia, IV, p.441; Mandelslo, p.55; Travels of Thevenot & Careri, p. 34; The people of the lingam sect buried the bodies : Storia III, p.71. Sinclair Stevenson, p.201; And, R.B. Pandey, p.417.

299. Manas, p.468, v.156.1; A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p.188.

As soon as the news of the death of a person spread,³⁰⁰ relations and friends poured in for condolence and joining the funeral procession.³⁰¹ Heart-rending lamentations of the women-folk could be heard from a long distance :

सोक बिकस सब रोवहि रानी । तब सीतु बलु तेहु बरानी ॥
करहि विलाप अनेक प्रकारा । परहि धूमिलत बारहि बारा ॥³⁰²

The corpse was, first of all, given a bath.³⁰³ It was then wrapped in a shroud³⁰⁴ and laid on the bier, referred to as 'khat'³⁰⁵ (probably because of its shape being that of a cot) or 'Viman' :

नृपतनु बेद बिदित अन्हवावा । परम विचित्र बिमानु बनावा ॥³⁰⁶

300. Guru Nanak refers to the Indian custom of tearing the top corner of a letter, when announcing the death of a relative: Macauliffe, I, p. 115.

301. Ramayan (Growse), p.458; Mrigavati, p.364, v. 421; Manas, p.469, v. 157; Storia, III, p.72.

302. Manas, p.468, v.155.2; Also, 'Sabad', Kabir, Santbani Sangrah, p.7; Ramayan (Growse), p.458; And, Storia, III, p.72.

303. Manas, p.479, v. 169.1; Ain, III (J & S), p.355; Herbert's Travels, p.45; And, A.P. Mathur (Thesis) p.188 .

304. Sabad, Kabir, Santbani Sangrah, p.7.

305. Padmavat, p.710, v.649 & p.711, v. 650;

306. Manas, p.479, v. 169.1; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494.

The richness of the shroud and the decorations of the bier or 'Viman' depended upon the wealth and status of the deceased.³⁰⁷ Then, the funeral procession started. The dead body was carried to the funeral ground on the shoulders of the relatives.³⁰⁸ The chief mourner, that is, the one who was to perform the rites walked just behind it.³⁰⁹

The cremation ceremony was performed at the marked cremation ground, generally, near a river bank :

सरखु तीर रवि चिता बनाई । अनु सुरपुर सोपान सुहाई ॥³¹⁰

The body was now given the final bath.³¹¹ And, after the bath, it was placed on the funeral pyre, made of firewood.³¹² The kind of the wood used, the size and the formation of

307. 'Sabad', Kabir, Santbani Sangrah, p.7; Also, Manas, p.479, v. 169.1.

308. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494; Also Travels In India, p.294; Storis, III, p.72; Ovington, p.342; And, Petermundy, II, p.220.

309. A.P. Mathur (Thesis), p.189.

310. Manas, p. 479, v. 169. 2; Also, Mrigavati, p.366, v.423:

"गाँव तीर से कै सर रखा ।" ; Also, Ain, (J & S)

III, p.356; Indian Travels of Thevenot & Careri, p.249; Della Valle' (1664 Edn.) p.435 Storis, III, p.71; And, Tavernier, Ch.VII, p.168.

311. Kavitt Ratnakar, p.113, v.53.

312. Manas, p.479, v. 169.2; Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v. 494. Also, Mrigavati, p. 366, v. 423.

the pyres were done strictly according to the sacred texts and nothing was left to the whims of the mourners.³¹³ Ordinary wood was used for the pyre of a commoner, while sandal-wood and 'lignum aloes' was employed by the rich.³¹⁴ Sandal, 'ghee' and perfumes were also used in the construction of the pyre :

चंदन अगर सुगंध और घृत, विधि करि चिता बनाओ ।³¹⁵

The nearest male relative - the eldest son, or any son , or the younger brother in the case of a female, and the husband in the case of a wife³¹⁶ lit the pyre- by applying fire to the four corners of the pyre,³¹⁷ after performing several religious rites, including the 'Pinda'.³¹⁸

313. R. B. Pandey, p. 434; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p. 187.

314. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494; Also, Manas, p.479, v. 169.2; Ramayan (Growse), p.257; Herbert's Travels, p.451; Nieuhoff's Voyages, p.229; Sinclair Stevenson, p.150.

315. Ibid; Also, Padmavat; p. 710, v. 649.

316. 'Sabad', Kabir, Santbani Sangrah, p.8; Ramayan (Growse), p.228; Also, Ain (J & S.), III, p.393.

317. Ibid.

318. Kabir Granthavali, p.233, v.2.

The mourners, in fact, carried a number of articles for performing the last rites and these included the flour or 'Ata'; empty earthen vessel (khali Handi) and fire or 'Aag' :

पांच गज दोवट्टी माँगी , घूल लीयो साँनि ।।
बेसंदर सोखरी हाँही, चल्पो लादि पलाँनि ।³¹⁹

The final rite was the 'kapal-kriya'³²⁰ after which, the body turned into ash and dust.³²¹ After the cremation, every body present took bath.³²² After the bath of the mourners, 'Tilanjali' was performed, offering water and linsid seeds to the dead soul :

भस्म अंत तिल - अंजलि दीन्हि, - - - - - 323

If the eldest son was not present during the cremation, he performed the 'Tilanjali', wherever he was.³²⁴

319. Kabir Granthavali, p.332, v. 15.

320. Ibid, p.201, v. 95 & p.204, v. 100.

321. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v. 494.

322. Manas, p.479, v. 169.3.

323. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494; Also Manas, p.479, v.169.3.

324. Manas, p.546, verses, 247, 247.1 & 247.2.

Mourning Rites :

'Asaucha' or the period of impurity varied from one to ten days generally.³²⁵ And, all these ten days, water in the earthen-pot has changed and an earthen-lamp was kept burning :

दिन दस लौं जलकुंभ साजि सुचि, दीप दान करवायो ।³²⁶

The mourning rites among the Hindus, it appears, followed the prescribed rules, which forbid certain things during this period of defilement, such as, the cutting of the hair and beard, study of the 'Veds', offerings to deities etc.³²⁷ Other rules observed were continence, sleeping on the ground, eating unspiced food and, that, too, only in the daytime- the share of cow and crow were set aside before eating this too.³²⁸

325. Ain, 111 (J.&S.), p.357; Herberts Travels, p.45; Menhoff's Voyages, p.228 : He mentions thirteen days mourning.

326. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494; Also, Manas, p.439, v.169.3 & p.440, v. 169.4.

327. Ain (J. & S.), p.356; Ovington, p. 243; Travels In India, p.294. And, Ramayan (Growse),p.257.

328. Ibid; And Bihari Satsai, p.434, v. 35; Also, Padavali, Kabir Granthavali (N.P.S. Kashi) p.207, v. 366; Petermundy II, p.220; And, Conti's 'Travel in India', p.25.

The 'Sanchayan' and 'Shuddhi' Rites :

'Sanchayan' or the rite of collection of bones and ashes would take place, after an interval varying from four to ten days, according to one's caste.³²⁹ The bones, thus, collected, would be washed in milk, deposited in an earthen-pot or a bag and thrown into a river, preferably, the 'Ganga'.³³⁰

The 'Shuddhi' was performed on the eleventh day, when the Brahmins were given a feast :

जानि एकादस विप्र बुलाए , भोजन बहुत करायो । ³³¹

Apart from cash money, cows, elephants, horses, carts, ornaments, clothes, grains, lands and houses were also distributed to them.³³²

329. Ain (J.& S.), III, p.356.

330. Sachau, II, p.169; Herbert's Travels, p.45; Ain (J.&S.), III, p.356; Travels of Thevenot & Careri, p.249 & p.294 : Della Valle (1664 Ed.) p.435; Storia, III, p.154; And, Islamic Culture, July, 1934, p.430.

331. Sur Sagar, I, pp.202-203, v.494; Also, Manas, p.480, v.169.4. And, Ain, (J.&S), III, p.357; E.R.E., II, p.810 & IV, p.479.

332. Ibid; Also, Manas, p.480, v. 170; And, In Padmavat, p.711, v.650, Jayasi refers to the charity immediately after the construction of the pyre :

"सर रवि दान पुनि बहु कीन्हा । - - - - -"

Finally, the 'Shraddh' ³³³ which Abul Fazl describes as the charity given in the name of the deceased, was observed usually on the death anniversary.³³⁴ Tukaram is said to have refused to forego this ceremony, even though, there was not a single penny at home.³³⁵ It was thought more efficacious if this ceremony could be performed at some religious shrine.³³⁶ And, during a fixed month - 'PitraPaksh' was observed in which offering of water was made to the dead ancestors and, this was known as 'Tarpan'.³³⁷

We, however, have a reference of the removal of the dying man to the river- side, especially the holy river Ganga, if, possible.³³⁸

333. Storia, III, p.73; J.R.A.S.(Bombay Branch), III, p.19; And, E.R.E., IV, p.479.

334. Ain (J & S.), III, pp.307-308; Tujuk (R. & B.), I, pp.246-247; Sinclair Stevenson, pp. 171-181; And, J.R.A.S. (Bombay Branch), Vol.III, p.19.

335. J.R.A.S., Bombay Branch, III, p.19; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society and culture, p.188 & p.217, f.n. 334.

336. The Chaitanya a Movement (M. Kennedy), p. 18; Also, P.N. Chopra, Society & Culture, p. 188.

337. Sur Sagar, I, p.382, v. 986.

338. Padmavat, pp.122-123, v.127; Especially, p.123, f.n.6. Fitch, Early Travels, p.22; Ain (J.&S.), III, p.354.

CHAPTER VII

The Religious Life

The basic purpose of religion was to help people realize the ultimate reality or salvation. As a result of the different philosophies (paths) being preached to attain salvation a number of sects grew-each emphasizing its own path :

दीपक महँ बिधि - जोति सगानी । आपहु वरे वाली निरबानी ।¹

For the Hindus, salvation was freedom from the bondage of rebirth or from the cycle of birth and death :

फिर - फिर जोनि अनंतनि भरणो , अब सुख सरन परयो ।²

1. Akhravat, Jayasi Granthavali, pp.312-313, v. 13 : Here Jayasi refers to salvation as 'Nirvan' - Buddhist term.

2. Sur Sagar, I, pp.51-52, v.156; Also compare with Kabir :
"सख घोरसो जीव जेत मै, भ्रमत भ्रमत नंद थाको ।"
Kabir Granthavali, p.174, v.48.

Thus, it was the attainment of a state of being, where the fear of death simply disappeared :

तिन्ह पावा उत्तिम कविलासू । जहाँ न मोछु तदा सुख बासू ।³

And, a man lived fearlessly - without the thought of death, chaining it down :

कबीर हम देखत जग जात है, जग देखत हम जाह ।

ऐसा कोई ना मिलै , पकड़ि छुड़ावे जाह ॥⁴

Since, God was considered to be the only reality- salvation meant the attainment of God :

कबीर गुर गोविंद तो एग है , दूजा महु आकार ।

आपा मेरि जीवत मरे , तो पावे करतार ॥⁵

3. Padmavat, p.141, v.146; Also, Kabir Granthavali, p.124, v.31 & p. 125, v. 32.

4. Kabir Granthavali, p. 111, v. 8; Also, p. 124, v. 31 & p. 125, v. 32.

5. Ibid, p.5, v. 26; Also, p.6, v. 35. And, p.8, v.7 :

"आई सूति कबीर की , पाया राम रत्न ।"

Also, p.10, v.24; p. 14, v.9 & p.25, v. 13.

The followers of Shankar's 'advaitvad' or non-dualism, therefore, suggested that the salvation is the merger of soul in the 'Brahma', just as the drop of water merges in water :

जलधि बूंद ज्यों जलधि समाई ।⁶

some have used the simile of flame merging in flame. That is, there being no distinction between the two :

- - - - - । जाइ समाइ जोति मई जोति ॥⁷

However, the real 'Advaitis' were against all distinction even between Hindu and Muslims :

राम रहीम अपत सुधि गई । उनि माला उनि तसबी लई ॥

कहे कबीर चेतहु रे भोंदू । बोलनहारा तुरक न हिंदू ॥⁸

6. Sur Sagar, I, p.567, v. 1503; Compare this with Kabir :

माटी माटी रही समाइ , p. 173, v. 45 of Kabir Granthavali; Also, p.33, v. 3&4.

7. 'Akhavat', Jayasi Granthavali, pp.321-322, v. 26; Also, Kabir Granthavali, p.26, v.16 & 17; p.42, v.23; p.94, v. 3; p.100, v. 17 & p. 101, v. 2.

8. Kabir Granthavali, p. 179, v. 56; Also, v.57.

Still, for some others, salvation was attainment of bliss or 'Anand! This bliss was, in fact, eternal bliss :

पद आनंद कास धै छूटे , सुख में सुरति समानों ।⁹

The very concept of salvation was an end to the agony of rebirth in this world. This, in fact, was supposed to be the real happiness- the salvation :

समर मरन हरि हाथ तुम्हारा । होइहुहु मुकुत न पुनि संसारा ।¹⁰

For some thinkers, salvation did not mean merger of soul in God, rather, it meant that, the soul had the privilege of being in close proximity with God and of serving Him like a servant.¹¹

सेवक कर पद नग्न से सुख सो साहिबु होइ ।
तुलसी प्रीति कि रीति सुनि मुकवि सराहहि सोइ ॥¹²

9. Kabir Granthavali, p.146,v.7; Also, p.129,v.12 :
"से चाल्या घरि आपणी , भारी पाया सघ ।"

10. Manas,p.138, v.138.4.

11. Padmavat, p.3, v.3.

12. Manas, p.599, v.306; Also,p.621, v.7; p.628,v.8.1.
And,p.632,v.11.

And, it was more with the vaishnavites, who believed in the 'Ram Bhakti'. The poets and philosophers made Hanuman - Ram relationship symbolic of the servant- master or soul- Brahma relationship.¹³

Thus, the ultimate aim preached by all the socio-religious philosophers was salvation- And, all of them accepted salvation as ultimate reality which resulted in union of , at least some degree with the God- thus, it signified unity. This concept was non- sectarian. And, therefore, men like Kabir stressed that people should not be misguided by the sects, communities etc.:

कबीर राम पियाइ है , जिम्मा सौं करि मंत ।
हरि सागर जिनि बीसरे , छीतर देखि अंत ॥¹⁴

13. Manas, p.744, v. 31.4, v, 32, v. 32.1.

14. Kabir Granthavali, p.12, v. 30.

According to Kabir, one should not be misguided by the numerous Gods and Goddesses - rather, one should concentrate on the Brahma. According to Kabir, ultimately all of them strive for salvation- though, they preach different paths for it.¹⁵ Whether it be Jangam or ascetics, or saints or Shakti- Shiv worshippers of family - deities (kul- Devta)¹⁶- all, ultimately, preach salvation. Not only among the Hindus, even there is hardly any difference between Hinduism and and Islam :

कावा फिर कासी भया , राम भा रहीम ।
मोठ छून मैदा भया , बेठि कबीरा जीम ॥¹⁷

It was, in accordance with the beliefs, faiths and principles a group followed, that a particular path was prescribed to attain 'mokksh' or salvation. Thus, knowledge was, preached to be the real torch- bearer of salvation as it dispelled the darkness of ignorance¹⁸

अब मैं पाइबो रे , पाइबो ब्रह्म गियाँन
सहज सामधैं सुख मैं रहिबो , कोरि क्लप विश्राम ॥¹⁹

15. Kabir Granthavali, p.371, v.3.

16. Kabir Granthavali, p.371, v.3.

17. Kabir Granthavali, p.92, v. 10.

18. Dr. C.D. Sharma, pp.286- 287

19. Kabir Granthavali, p. 145, v.6; Also, Padmavāt, p.86, v.88; And, pp.163-164, v.171; And, Dohavali, p.93, v.273.

And , due to lack of knowledge, the man is forced to remain in the vicious circle of birth, death and rebirth:

न्यायं अद्यत फिर नर लोई , तापे जनमि जनमि उरकाये ।²⁰

However, of the various paths to salvation, the easiest and the best was 'bhakti' :

सुरदास भक्त - भजन बिनु , जेहे जनम गैवाइ ॥²¹

Or,

बहुत भात भौतागरा , नाना बिधि नाना भाव ।

जिहि हिरदै श्रीहरि भैटा , सो भद कहूँ कहूँ ठाव ॥²²

The bhakti as a means of salvation, seems to gain popularity because, the path of knowledge was considered to be a difficult path, which could be treaded by the elite only, who had the privilege to study the religious - texts :

कहत कठिन समुझत कठिन साधत कठिन विदेक ।

होइ घुनाछर न्याय जौं पुनि प्रत्युह अनेक ॥²³

20. Kabir Granthavali, p.150, v.12.

21. Sur Sagar, I, p.104, v. 317 ; Also, Kabir Granthavali, p.112, v. 13.

22. Kabir Granthavali, p.162, v. 28; Also, v. 29.

23. Manas, p. 1042, v. 118 (kh): Also, p.962, v. 44.2.

And, the 'Avidya' is automatically dispelled by the 'bhakti' :

अस विद्यारि हरि भात समाने । मुक्ति निरादर भाति लुभाने ॥
भाति करत बिनु अतन प्रयासा । संमृति मूल अविद्या नासा ॥²⁴

The 'bhakti' assumes further importance due to the conditions of 'Kaljug':²⁵

कलियुग केवल हरिगुन गाहा । गावत नर पात्रहिं भव थाहा ॥²⁶

Alongwith 'Gyan' and 'Bhakti', 'karma' was also a path prescribed even in the medieval times for salvation. Stress was laid on the actions and deeds of men. They had to sow as they reaped :

करम प्रधान बिसव करि राखा । जो जय करइ सो तस फलु थाखा ॥²⁷

24. Manas, p.1043, v. 118.4; p.1044, v. 119.3.

25. Manas, p.29, v. 21.4; Also, p. 962, v.44.1; p.1001, verses 86.2 and 86.3.

26. Manas, p.1018, v.102.2 & 102.3.

27. Manas, p. 522, v. 218.2.

And, these 'karms' were, in fact, responsible for shaping everyone's destiny :

कौसल्या कह दोसु न काहु । करम विवस दुख सुख छति लाहु ॥
कठिन करम गति जान विधाता । जो सुभ असुभ सकस पस दावा ॥²⁸

And, therefore, we do -- find references of the theory of the 'Nishkam karm Yog' of Bhagvad gita in the sixteenth century Hindi literature.²⁹

This 'bhakti' as preached in the sixteenth century was different in character and composition of the earlier doctrine of bhakti from the time of 'Bhagvad Gita' to the early medieval times. The earlier 'bhakti', in fact, was based on the principle of unflinching loyalty to a God, suiting and serving the feudal ideology.³⁰ The latter or the Vaishnav bhakti was, however, not the dominant form of

28. Manas, p. 578, v.281.2.

29. Manas, p.949, v.29.3.

30. D.D.Kosambi, 'The culture and Civilization of Ancient India, p. 208.

religiosity among the ruling aristocracy.³¹ This 'democratically oriented popular bhakti movement'³² as a matter of fact, evolved from the devotional songs of the Alvar Saints.³³

This bhakti was characterized by the emotional fervour,³⁴ stress on love³⁵ and minimization of the formalities conventionalism and ceremonialism in religion³⁶, in fact it crystallized into 'an apathy towards intellectualism.'³⁷

As early as the twelfth century A.D., the seeds of this form of 'bhakti' had started germinating. It was in fact, 'connected with an attempt to rub the angularities of social differences and to resolve the tension by offering faith in a personal god, who was close to the high as well as the low, the rich as well as the poor.'³⁸

31. B.N. S. Yadav, p.378.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid, Also, f.n. 490, p.396.

34. Joachim Wach, Sociology of Religion, p.239.

35. Kabir, Granthavali, p.25, v.13 & 14; p.112, v. 12.

36. B.N.S. Yadav, p.379.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

The social function of providing a common platform to the various religious groups, sects and communities as found in India,³⁹ was begun by the 'bhakts'. The Muslim sufis and mystics were close to these bhakts and both of them, even tried to bring Hindus and Muslims closer.⁴⁰ Thus we, find that an atmosphere was already being created finally, poets like Kabir took over the mantle of finding a 'modus vivendi' and acceptable means of reconciling the different castes and religious communities of Northern India and abolishing religious antagonisms.⁴¹

Kabir strived tirelessly for the communal unity and tried to prove that Hindus and Muslims are, ultimately one. A doubt of separation has been deliberately created between the two :

अरे भाई दोइ कलैं सो मोहि बतावो ।

बिचि हो भ्रम का भेद लगावो ॥

जोनि उपाइ रही द्वे धरनीं । दोन एक बीचि भई करनीं ॥⁴²

39. India was a land of many religions, religious groups, sects etc : Fitch, *Early Travels* (Foster), pp.18-24, Also, Mohammad Yasin, p.71; And, J.L. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, p.244.

40. P.N. Chopra, *Society and Culture*, p. XV.

41. Yusuf Hussain , p. 16.

42. Kabir Granthavali, p.179, v. 56; Also, p. 180, verses 58 & 59.

And, Kabir proclaimed it, to be his sublime duty to forge a unity between the two :

कहे कबीर मैं हरि गुन गाऊं | हिंदू मुसल दोऊ संपसाऊं ॥⁴³

After-all, their religious practices are, more or less, common. Both keep fasts, both perform prayers and go for pilgrimages and the goal is even same - yet they proclaim their difference with is a myth and is not true.⁴⁴

The Hindu - Muslim unity or the Synthesis of the two cultures, however, could not have been achieved without a proper harmony between the various Hindu religious groups and sects. Amongst the Hindus the worshippers of the 'Sagun' and 'Nirgun' form were the two main dominant groups - at least, in the Medieval Bhakti Pantheon.

And, therefore, the poets of this period, made it a point to sink the differences and forge a unity between these two mainstreams of the Bhakti thought. And, Kabirdas was the torch - bearer here too. He said

43. Kabir Granthavali, p.298, v.49.

44. Ibid , p.347, v.13.

that, ultimately both are the same :

गुण में त्रिगुण त्रिगुण में गुण है , बाट छा'हिं कयूं बहिये ।⁴⁵

And, not only this class of socially conscious poets, but even those who harped the superiority of the 'sagun' Bhakti-poets like Surdas⁴⁶ - even wrote about their synthesis.⁴⁷ He might have felt the social importance of the same :

निरगुन सगुन त्व परि आए - - - - -⁴⁸

Another Sagun poet of the Bhakti period, Tulsidas thought and wrote on the same lines and tried to bring forth a conciliation between the two :

अय सगुन निगुन त्व त्व अनूप भूप सिरामने ।⁴⁹

45. Kabir Granthavali, p.254, v. 28 & p. 255, v. 30, Also, Padmavet, pp.158-159, v. 165.

46. Sur Sagar, 1, p.1, v. 2 & p.2, v.4; Also, Sur Sagar Sar, p.17, v.2.

47. Ibid, p.1, v. 2; p.2, v.4; p.167, v. 424; p.175, v.437.

48. Sur Sagar, I, p. 388, v.1004; Also, pp.608-609, v.1626.

49. Manas, p. 929, v. 12.1 & p. 931, v. 12.6 :

The 'Sagun' form, according to him is nothing, but the Nirgun Brahma attributed with the qualities by the 'bhakt' himself.⁵⁰ In fact, both Sagun and Nirgun are the same.⁵¹ The Nirgun transcends to become the Sagun, due to Maya's effect :

मायाछन्न न देखिजे जेहो निर्गुन ब्रह्म ।⁵²

This synthesis assumes an importance and stresses the social need of the sixteenth century India, because Tulsidas himself, a poet of the 'Sagun bhakti' - had to accept 'Nirgun bhakti' also- though, stressing the importance of 'Sagun bhakti'.⁵³

In the 'Sagun bhakti' , too, the Hindu concept of Trinity, that is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv remained predominant. And, therefore, the Hindi poets of the sixteenth century India, stressed the underlying unity of this trinity :

सरग न, धरति न लुभाय , ब्रह्म न बिगुन गहस ।⁵⁴

50. Manas, p.522,v.218.3 :

51. Manas, p.632,v.10.6 and v. 10.10; p.635, v.12.7;Also,p.662, v.31.1, 31.2 & 31.3 ; Dohavali,p.15,v.7; And, Geetavali, pp.143-144,v.86.2; pp.393-395, v.7.6.

52. Manas, p.670, v. 39(k) ; p.697, v. 16.1 & p.706, v. 25.6.

53. Dohavali, p.85, v.251 and p.86, v. 252.

54. 'Akhravat', Jayasi Granthavali,p.304,v.2;pp.334-335,v.47.

Tulsidas, a Ram Bhakt poet or a Vishnu follower or Vaishnavite praises all the three in the very beginning of his Manas⁵⁵ and says that all the three are basically one.⁵⁶ Tulsidas makes use of opportunities in his epic to describe the basic unity and makes them meet at one place⁵⁷ - though, at times, he stresses the superiority of his Ram.⁵⁸ Similarly, the Sagun bhakts realizing the importance of the three main deities tried to forge a sense of unity in the concept of trinity and suggested that it is a question of the form that you want to worship - otherwise, it is all same.⁵⁹

But, for all practical or worshipping purposes, the Shiv and Vishnu form remained the most dominant. Therefore, the bhakt-poets made untiring efforts to propagate their unity. They made use of all opportunities for a proper synthesis of the two.⁶⁰

55. Manas, p.3, v. 3, v.4 & v.5.

56. Manas, p.26, v.18.1; p.177, v.185.3; Also Kabir Granthavali, pp.265-267, v. 44 & v. 45.

57. Manas, p.91, v. 87.3; p.95, v.91.4.

58. Manas, p.705, v. 25; p.758, v.47; p. 788, v.15(k) ;p.823, v.48 (kh) & p. 826, v. 51.

59. Sur Sagar, I, pp.139-141, v.399; pp.162-166, v.421; Also, Geetavali, p.284, v.2; pp.322-323, v.25.2 & 25.3; & pp.325-326, v.37.3.

60. Kabir Granthavali, pp.218-219, v. 126.

In Manas, we have ample references where both Shiv and Ram have worshipped each other. These examples, in fact, bring forth, the firm faith of the people in the existing custom, where both the Shaivites and Vaishnavites considered themselves superior to the other. Tulsidas, thus, has brought forth a synthesis between the two faiths laying stress on the wider unity of the Hindus. He gives an example where Lord Shiv and his consort Parvati both recite the name of Ram and perform his prayers.⁶¹ Not only this, we find, Tulsidas, stressing the Vaishnavites, especially the bhakts of Lord Ram, to worship Lord Shiv also, as the worship till then shall remain incomplete :

सिव पद कमल चिन्हहिरतिनाही । रामहि ते सपनेहुँ न सोहाही ॥
बिनु छल बिस्वनाथ पद नेहू । राम भात कर लच्छन दूहू ॥⁶²

61. Manas, p.14, v. 9.1; p.57, v. 49.1; p.59, v. 50.4; p.60, v.51.4; p.108,v.103.4; p.111, v.107.4; p.114, v. 110.4; & v. 111.3; p. 933,v.14 (kh);

62. Manas, p.108,v.103.3; p.137,v.137.3 & 137.4; p.962,v.45; p.1020, v. 104(kh). 3; p.1021, v.105 (kh).1 & v.105(kh).2; Also, Geetavali, p.130, v.80; Vinay-Patrika,pp.332-333, v.205;

And, Tulsidas, the Ram-bhakt, himself, worships Shiv, alongwith Ram.⁶³ And, later on, he makes use of an occasion to make his personal God - Lord Ram worship Shiv :

करिहउँ इहाँ संभु थापना । सोरे हृदयँ परम क्लपना ॥⁶⁴

Thus, according to this new thought and ideology of socio-religious basis of unity among the Hindus, the bhakti of one is incomplete without the veneration of the other. And, people worshipping one but keeping an irreverent attitude (or condemning) towards the other are destined to hell - there is no heaven or salvation for such people :

रंकरिप्रिय मम द्रोही सिव द्रोही मम दास ।

ते नर करहिं क्लप भरि घोर नरक महुँ बास ॥⁶⁵

63. Manas, p.773, shlok 1 & 2 ; Also, Geetavali, pp.337-338 , v.39(6); Vinay-Patrika, pp.50-52, v. 27 & v. 28; Dohavali, p.42, v. 101;

64. Manas, p.775, v. 1.2; p.776, v. 1.3, v. 1.4, p.907, v. 119(k);

65. Manas, p.776, v.2; & v.2.2;

Surdas, a worshipper of the Krishn - form of Lord Vishnu, also, similarly, prays and praises Lord Shiv - thereby, works for the synthesis between Shaivites and Vaishnavites :

महादेव पूजित मन वच करि धूर स्वात्म की आस ॥^{66.}

This plane of Shaiv - Vaishnav Synthesis was then widened to inculcate the feeling of a synthesis between Hinduism and Buddhism (Thus, making it evident , that remnants of Buddhism did remain). This was, in fact, brought forth, by declaring Lord Buddh - an 'avtar' or reincarnation of Lord Vishnu himself !⁶⁷

66. Sur Sagar, I, p.524, v. 1384; Also, p.529, v. 1400; pp.533-534, v. 1416; pp.534-535, v. 1417; And, Sur Sagar, II, p.12, v. 2423.

67. Sur Sagar, I, pp.125-126, v. 379.

Islam had not only come to stay in India, but, by the sixteenth century, its influence was well-established especially, in North India. Thus, no account of religious life could be complete without a brief description of it. That, the Islam was founded by the prophet is evident also in the writings of the Hindi poets of medieval India.⁶⁸ It was propagated and preached with zeal and vigour by the four earlier caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali.⁶⁹ Further, the Quran was compiled from the earlier oral tradition, under the able leadership and patronage of Caliph Usman.⁷⁰

We also get a reference of the four basic elements which were responsible for the creation of this universe, as per the Islamic belief. These were fire, air, water and soil.⁷¹ According to the Islamic belief, there

68. Padmavat, pp.9-10, v. 11; 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Grantha-vali, p.340, v.4.

69. Padmavat, pp. 10-11, v. 12 .

70. Padmavat, pp. 10-11, v. 12.

71. Padmavat, p. 1, v. 1.

were also eighteen hundred (1800) 'yonis' or different types of creatures created by God.⁷² The first creation was the light or 'Noor' - in the form of the Prophet.⁷³ In the Islamic mythology, Iblees is supposed to be the devil, drawing people away from God.⁷⁴

Similarly, we find references also to the angels like Makail,⁷⁵ Zibrail,⁷⁶ Israfeel,⁷⁷ Azrail⁷⁸ or the equivalent of the Hindu 'yamraj' (or the angel of death). We also get the description of the day of final judgement, when, according to the Islamic belief, people are either rewarded or punished according to their deeds and acts.⁷⁹

72. Padmavat, p.4, v.4; Also, p.4, f.n. 8; Also 'Akhraavat', Jayasi Granthavali, p.303, v.1.

73. Padmavat, p.1, v.1, Also, 'Akhraavat', Jayasi Granthavali p.303, v.1.

74. 'Akhraavat', Jayasi Granthavali, p.305, v. 3; p.322, v.27.

75. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, pp.344, 345, v.16 & v.18; p.346, v. 20.

76. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, p.345, v.17; p.346, v.20; p.347, v.23 & 24; p.355, v. 45; p.359, v.56;

77. 'Akhri kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, pp.345-346, v.19; p.346, v.20;

78. 'Akhri kalam' Jayasi Granthavali, p.346, v. 20;

79. 'Akhri kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, pp.346-350, verses 20-32.

In the same manner , we do get reference of both 'Hasan and Husain'⁸⁰, Their mother Fatim Bibi⁸¹ and their assassin yajeed.⁸² We also get a reference of the two most pious and sacred pilgrim places of the Islamic world, that is, the 'Mecca and the Medina'.⁸³

As far as the sufi order of Muslim Saints is concerned, we get references of some prominent saints like Jahangir of the Chistiya order.⁸⁴

80. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, p.353,v.39.

81. 'Akhri Kalam', Jayasi Granthavali, p. 354, v. 42.

82. 'Akhri Kalam' , Jayasi Granthavali, p.354, v. 42.

63. 'Akhravat' Jayasi Granthavali , p.310, v. 10;

84. Padmavat, pp. 17-19, v. 18; Also, Akhri Kalam,' Jayasi Granthavali, pp. 341- 342, v. 9.

The other popular saints of the Chisti order were 'Sheikh Mubarak and Sheikh kamal'.⁸⁵ We also find a reference to khwaja khizr - the immortal saint,⁸⁶ alongwith Sheikh Muhiuddin⁸⁷, Sheikh Burhan,⁸⁸ Alahdad⁸⁹, Saiyyad Mohammad,⁹⁰ Daniyal⁹¹ Syed Raji or Hamid Shah Sufi.⁹² Similarly, we also find a reference of the most venerated Sufi saint Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya.⁹³

Kabir, who had drawn a lot from the Islamic beliefs, refers to 'Allah', 'Karim' or 'Ranin' as names of the Almighty ! ⁹⁴ In practising their religion or religious rites, we come across 'Qazi, Mullah, Pir and Pe'gambar',⁹⁵

85. Padmavat, pp.18-19, v. 19.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. 'Akhravat', Jayasi Granthavali, pp. 321-322, v.26.

94. Kabir Granthavali, p.180,v.58.

95. Ibid.

who act as religious leaders or teachers or guides. The Muslims in general keep the annual month long fast, known as the 'Roza',⁹⁶ and offer their prayers or 'namez' while facing west.⁹⁷ He refers to circumcision or 'Sunnat',⁹⁸ a rite - which every Muslim male has to undergo.

The Socio - Religious Groups

Of the prominent social groups, formed due to their similar religious beliefs, mention may be made of the Vaishnavites or the worshippers of Lord Vishnu. They were, in general, considered to be better than the 'Shakts' or the followers of the 'Shakti'cult :

बैष्णवों की छपरी भली , ना साखत का बड़ गाँउं ।।⁹⁹

96. Kabir Granthavali, p. 180, v. 58.

97. Ibid, Also, p. 181, v. 61;

98. Kabir Granthavali, p. 180, v. 59.

99. Kabir Granthavali, p.88, v. 1; p.90, v. 9.

Those mothers, who gave birth to Vaishnav sons were considered blessed.¹⁰⁰ They applied different types of religious marks on their fore-heads and practised other beliefs.¹⁰¹

The worshippers of 'Bhakti' came to be regarded as inferior to the followers of other cults and Gods.¹⁰² However, the Shaivites were considered much superior and at par with the Vaishnavites by the bhakt- poets of the sixteenth century.¹⁰³ They, therefore, worked for a unity between the two, by declaring that, ultimately, The three main deities of the Hindu faith were the same.¹⁰⁴

100. Kabir Granthavali, p.88, v.1; p.90, v.7.

101. Padmavat, p.414, v. 409.

102. Kabir Granthavali, p.88, v.1; p.90, v.9.

103. Manas, p.14, v.9.1; p.57, v.49.1; p.108, v.103.3 & 103.4; p.114, v.110.4 & 11.3; p.137, v.137.3 & 137.4; p.773, Shlok 1 & 2; p.907, v. 119(k); p.962, v. 45; p.1021, v.105(kh).1 & 105 (kh).2; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.524, v.1384; pp.533-534, v. 1416; And, Sur Sagar, II, p.12, v.2423.

104. Geetavali, p.284, v.2. Sur Sagar, I, p.141, v. 400; pp.162, 163, v. 421; & Manas, p.3, v.3, 4 & 5; p. 91, v.87.3 p.626, v. 51; & Akhravat, p. 304, v.2.

The bhakt - poets of Medieval India, especially in the sixteenth century, were, as a matter of fact, trying to build a new society based on a complete socio-religious synthesis or harmony, as described above. And, in the building of a society with better, universal values - vices had to be shunned and virtues extolled instead. Therefore, morality gained importance in the teachings of these poets. Among the vices to be shunned most were, ¹⁰⁵greed and ego or false pride :

बोला भट नरेस सुनु गरब न हाजा जीव । ¹⁰⁵

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105. Manas, p.670, v. 38 (kh); p.696, v.15(kh).2; p.808, v.33.7; Also, Sur Sagar, I, pp.9-10, v.27; p.14, v. 40; p.26, v.78, pp.31-32, v.99; Padmavat, pp.71-72, v.72; pp.392-393, v.386; And, Kabir Granthavali, p.45, v.41.
106. Padmavat, p.252, v.265; pp.392-393, v.386 ; pp.70-71, v.71; & pp.409-410, v.404; Also, Manas, p.129, v.128.2; p.694, v.13.3; p.749, v.36.1 & p.812, v.36.3; Sur Sagar, I, p.4, v.11; p.14, v.40; pp.31-32, v.99; pp.68-69, v.208; pp.153-154, v.411; p.490, v.1269; Also, Sur Sagar, II, p.65, v.2692 : जहाँ गर्व अभिमान है, तहाँ मोविंद नाहीं ।
- p.66, v.2694; & p.69, v.2710; And, Kabir Granthavali, p.45, v.41 & v.42.

Similarly, lust for anything was to be abhorred :

काम, क्रोध, मद, लोभ , मोह, मे भर धोर ते साहु ।¹⁰⁷

Among others in this list of evil qualities, were anger¹⁰⁸, and ill-desires or thoughts.¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, they made a list of virtues to be extolled so that they be acquired by all and the whole society may become value-based and virtuous.¹¹⁰ And, therefore, much stress was laid on the company that one kept. There was a continuous emphasis on 'satsang':.

असंत संगति जिनि जाइ रे भुलाइ । साध संगति मिलि हरि गुण पाइ ॥¹¹¹

107- Sur Sagar, I, p.14, v.40; p.17, v.49; Also, Padmavat, pp.163-164, v.170; And, Kabir Granthavali, p.114, v.7.

108- Kabir Granthavali, p.114, v.7; Manas, p.256, v.277; Padmavat, p.88, v.90; Sur Sagar, I, pp.9-10, v.27; p.14, v.40; pp.31-32, v.99. जहाँ गर्व अभिमान है, तहाँ गोविंद नाहीं ।

109. Ibid.

110. Manas, p.856, v.79.3; 79.4; 79.5 & 79.6.

111. Kabir Granthavali, p.217, v.122; p.296, v.46; & pp.382-383, v.5; Also, Sur Sagar, I, p.28, v.86 :

अजहूँ मूठ करौ सतसंगति, संतनि में कह्यु पैरे ।

p.43, v.130; p.50, v.152; p.62, v.190; p.120, v.230; pp.150-151, v. 409;

Thus the company of good and virtuous was advocated so that a man may imbibe good qualities and high values :

कबीर संगति साध की , कदे न त्रिपस होइ ।
चंदन होसी धांवना , नींब न कहसी कोइ ॥ ¹¹²

On the other hand, people were, also, warned to shun bad company or 'Kusang' or 'Kusangati' :

कपीर मारी मल्ल कुसंग की , केसी काटे बेरि ।
जो हाते जो बीरिये , साखि संग नबेरि ॥ ¹¹³

Bad people or evil characters have evil influence on even good men and they spoil them too :

सुनहु असनह केर सुभाउ । भूलेहु संगति करिअ न काउ ॥
तिन्ह कर संग तदा दुखदाई । बिमि कपितहि छालइ हरहाई ॥ ¹¹⁴

112. Kabir Granthavali, p.63,v.1; v.2; v.3; & v.5;

113. Kabir Granthavali; p.60,v.4; v.5; Also, v. 2 & 3;

114. Manas, p.957,v.38.1; Also, 38.2; 38.3; 38.4 & v.39 p.958,v.39.1; 39.2; 39.3; 39.4 & v.40; also v.40.1. Also, p.353, v. 23.4:

" को न कुसंगति पाइ नसाई । - - - - - ॥ "

Whereas, in the company of good people one can hope to improve - in the case of evil persons - the ill - fate is inevitable.¹¹⁵

A good man or a man who wishes to lead a virtuous life was supposed to remain free from carnal desires or cravings :

बिधिया सँ न्यारा रहे , सतनि का अंग रह ॥¹¹⁶

A virtuous man is a man of great or high character and no desires or evil influence has an effect on him :

कबीर संत न हारें संतई , जे कोटिक मिलैं असत ॥¹¹⁷

But, bad company should still be avoided.¹¹⁸ One should be in good company and praise good men and their qualities for those, who condemn or criticize good and virtuous persons are destined to go to hell.¹¹⁹ In fact, in a general way, too, one should not criticize others.¹²⁰

115. Kabir Granthavali, p.135, v.10; p. 136, v. 11 & v.12.

116. Kabir Granthavali, p.85,v.1; v.5; Also, p.93,v.3; p.111, v.4; And, Sur Sagar, I,p.36, v.110; p.43, v. 129.

117. Ibid, p.85,v.2; v.3;

118. Ibid, p. 110, v.1, 2 & 3.

119. Kabir Granthavali,p.133, v.5.

120. Ibid, pp.259-260, v. 37;

A good man or a 'sant' is always characterized by his truthfulness :¹²¹

राजें कहा सत कह सुआ । बिनु सत कस अस सेवर मुआ ।¹²²

There is hardly a trace of anger in a good and virtuous man.¹²³ Rather he is tolerant and sympathetic towards all.¹²⁴

A man, in order to acquire a higher pedestal, according to the moral values, should have no pride or ego :

कबीर रोड़ा हवे रह बाट का , तजि पाखंड अभिमान ।

ऐसा जे जन हवे रहे , ताहि मिसे भावान ॥¹²⁵

121. Kabir Granthavali ; pp.259-260, v. 37;

122. Padmavat, p.90, v. 92; Sur Sagar, I, p.36, v. 110 ;

123. Kabir Granthavali, p. 42, v. 127; p.43, v. 129; Manas, p. 445, v. 129.1;

124. Kabir Granthavali, p.105, v.2; p.129, v.9; pp.259-260, v. 37; Manas, pp. 445-446, v. 129.1, 129.2 & 129.4; p.962, v. 44.2.

125. Kabir Granthavali, p. 110, v. 14; pp. 354-355, v.24; Also, Padmavat, pp. 393-394, v. 387; Also, Manas, p.445, v. 129.1; p.676, v.44.5

But, at the same time, he should have the courage of conviction - to stand boldly against the worldly- evils :

कबीर काइर हूवां न छूटिये , कहु सुरातन साहि ।¹²⁶

Tulsidas has taken up the story of Kavan to prove Ram's courage, as well as, the ill - luck that strikes a man, who had cast evil-eyes on other's wife. Thus, a good and virtuous man should always consider other women-as pious as their own mothers.¹²⁷ Moreover, they should express regret over the difficulties of others and have a sense of pity :

- - - - - । दुखित होहिं पर बिपति बिसेषी ॥¹²⁸

126. Kabir Granthavali, p.113, v. 1,2 & 3; p.115, v.10; p.116 , v. 18; Manas,p.676,v. 45.3; Sur Sagar, I, p.42, v. 127; p. 43, v. 129; And, Padmavat, p.90, v.92; pp. 141-142, v. 146;

127. Manas, p.446, v. 129.3 :

" जननी सग जानहिं परनारी । - - - - - ॥ "

128. Manas, p. 446, v. 129.4.

This, in fact, helps them to be benevolent towards down-trodden and poor - to whom they give alms liberally.¹²⁹ These qualities, as a matter of fact, combine to make a man selfless in serving others¹³⁰ and acting without the desires of sweet fruits or better returns, that is, with a 'Nishkam' feeling.¹³¹ Moreover, one should perform any deed after having thought too well about it.¹³²

If a man follows the path of truth and is virtuous then God will bestow all happiness on him :
तिमि सुख संपति विनहिं बोलार्ह । परमसौत पहिं जाहि सुभार्ह ॥¹³³
Thus, religious sanctity was added to the social norms and values, to which men were supposed to adhere. These virtues, in fact, were necessary for social harmony, cohesiveness and well-being.

129. Padmavat, pp. 140-141, v. 145; pp. 393-394, v. 387.

130. Kabir Granthavali, pp. 125-126, v. 6 & 7; Manas, p. 86, v. 83.1; p. 1026, v. 108 (Gh). 3.

131. Kabir Granthavali, p. 67, v. 7.

132. Manas, p. 533, v. 230.2.

133. Manas, p. 268, v. 293.2 & p. 694, v. 13.4; Also, Kabir Granthavali, pp. 259-260, v. 37; Sur Sagar, I, pp. 132-137, v. 394.

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